CIPHER

Mamako Narita

9

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CIPHER

Volume 9

By Minako Narita

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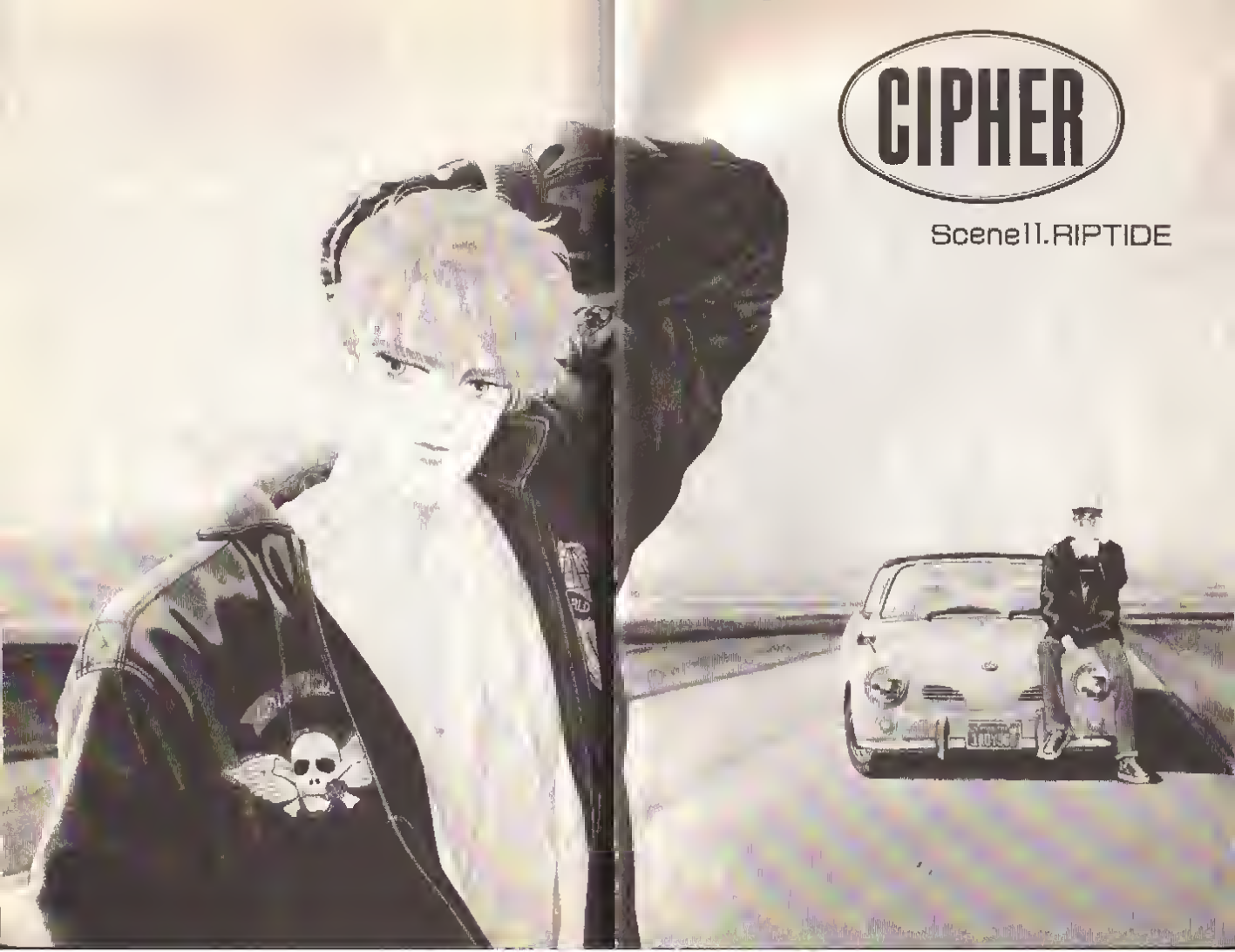

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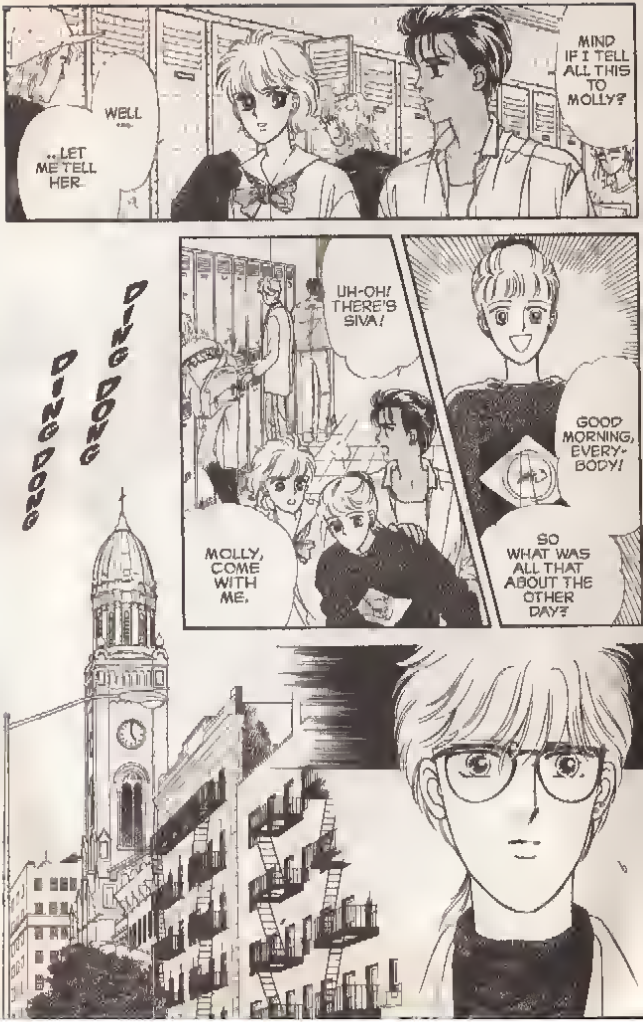
MIND IF I TELL ALL THIS TO MOLLY?
WELL...
..LET ME TELL HER.
UH-OH! THERE'S SIVA!
GOOD MORNING, EVERY-BODY!
SO WHAT WAS ALL THAT ABOUT THE OTHER DAY?
MOLLY, COME WITH ME.
DING DONG
DING DONG

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Caffe NAPOLI Espresso
Caffe NAPOLI
SO THAT'S THE SHORT VERSION, ANYWAY
BUT YOU CAN'T TELL ANY-BODY
EVEN IF ANYBODY ELSE FIGURES IT OUT.
AND DEFINITELY DON'T TELL SIVA.

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OH, C'MON, DON'T CRY.
.....
SURE.
I CAN'T HELP IT.
WHY...
IT'S NOBODY'S FAULT, AFTER ALL.
I WAS BAD, TOO.
TO ALEX, ANY-WAY.
IT LOOKS LIKE HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
I'M STILL WORRIED ...
THAT SIVA ACTUALLY BLAMES HIMSELF SOME
I'M SO EMBAR-RASSED NOW.
I SHOT OFF MY MOUTH AND TOLD SIVA "IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT" THE OTHER DAY.
I feel awful.

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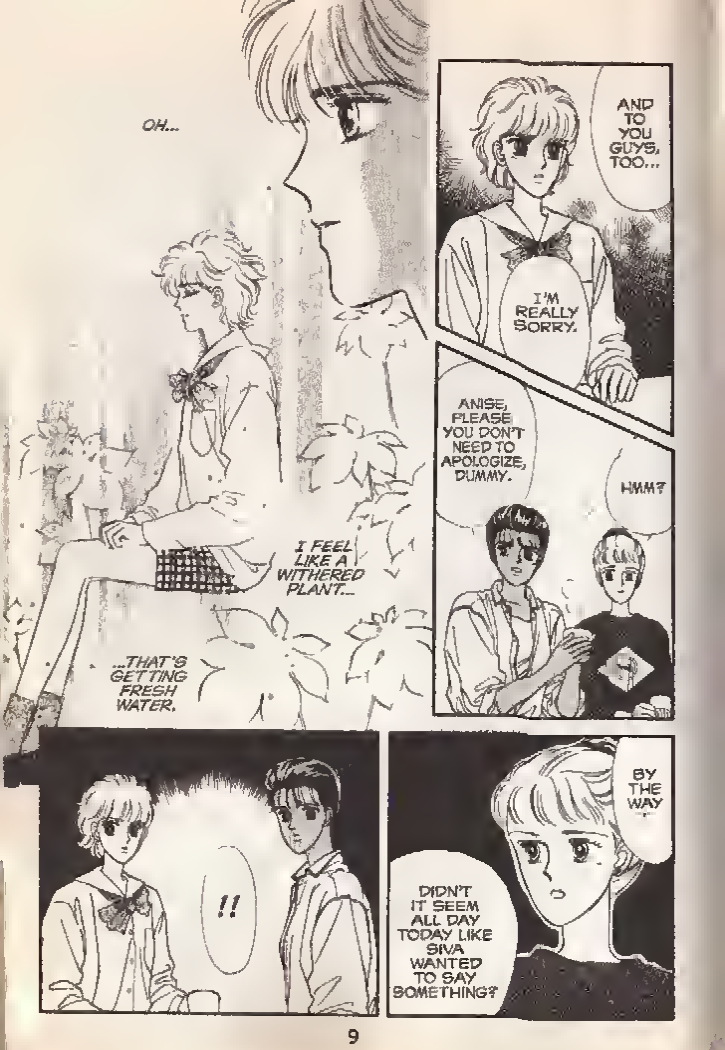
OH...
AND TO YOU GUYS, TOO...
I'M REALLY SORRY.
ANISE, PLEASE YOU DON'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE, DUMMY.
HMM?
I FEEL LIKE A WITHERED PLANT...
...THAT'S GETTING FRESH WATER.
!!
BY THE WAY
DIDN'T IT SEEM ALL DAY TODAY LIKE SIVA WANTED TO SAY SOMETHING?

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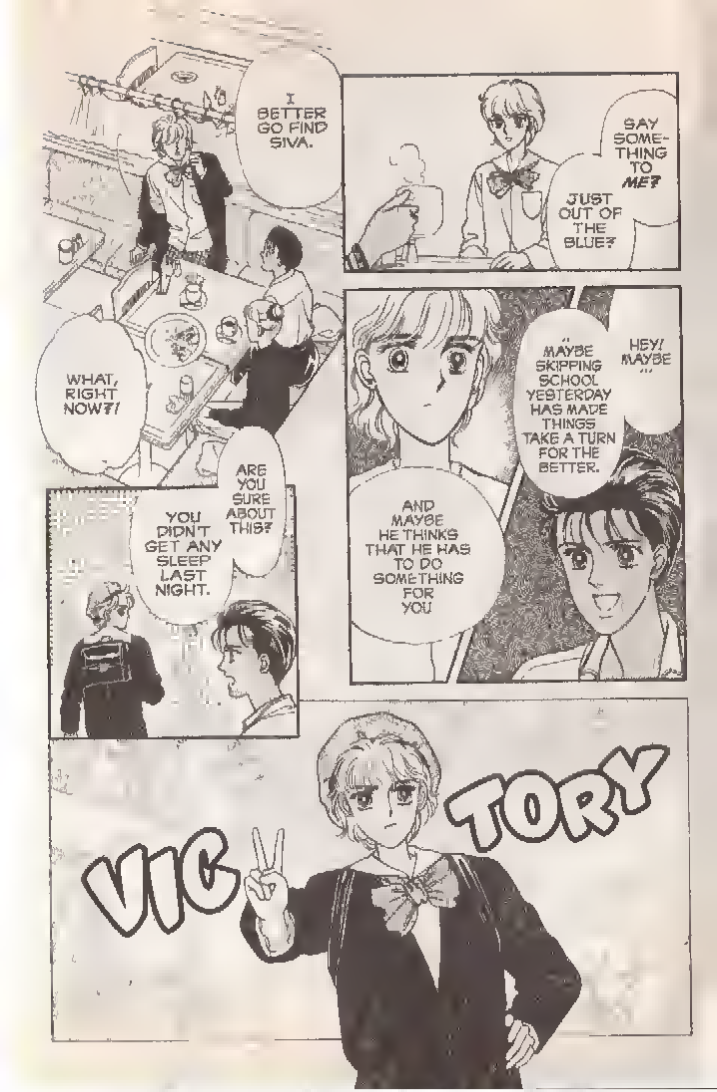
I BETTER GO FIND SIVA.
WHAT, RIGHT NOW?!
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
YOU DIDN'T GET ANY SLEEP LAST NIGHT.
SAY SOME-THING TO ME?
JUST OUT OF THE BLUE?
AND MAYBE HE THINKS THAT HE HAS TO DO SOMETHING FOR YOU
"MAYBE SKIPPING SCHOOL YESTERDAY HAS MADE THINGS TAKE A TURN FOR THE BETTER.
HEY! MAYBE "
VIC TORY

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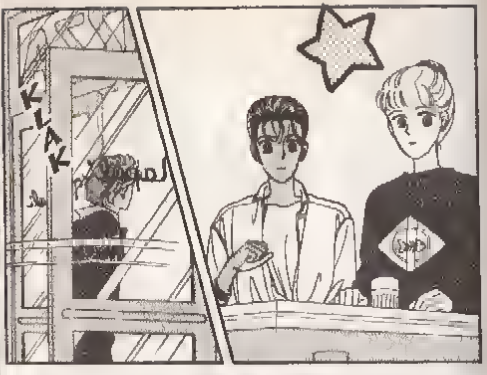
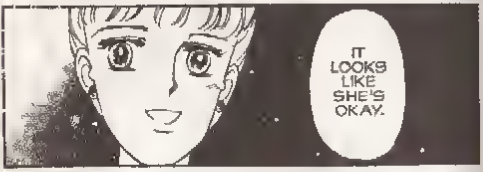
HERE'S A SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO CAN READ CHINESE:

讀者們，您好！
謝謝你們愛讀"青春密語(CIPHER)"。我非常高興我的漫畫受很多國家讀者的歡迎。
"青春密語"不久就結束。到最後我一定盡力而為。
請你們拜讀看！

(ED NOTE: SEE TRANSLATION ON PAGE 167)





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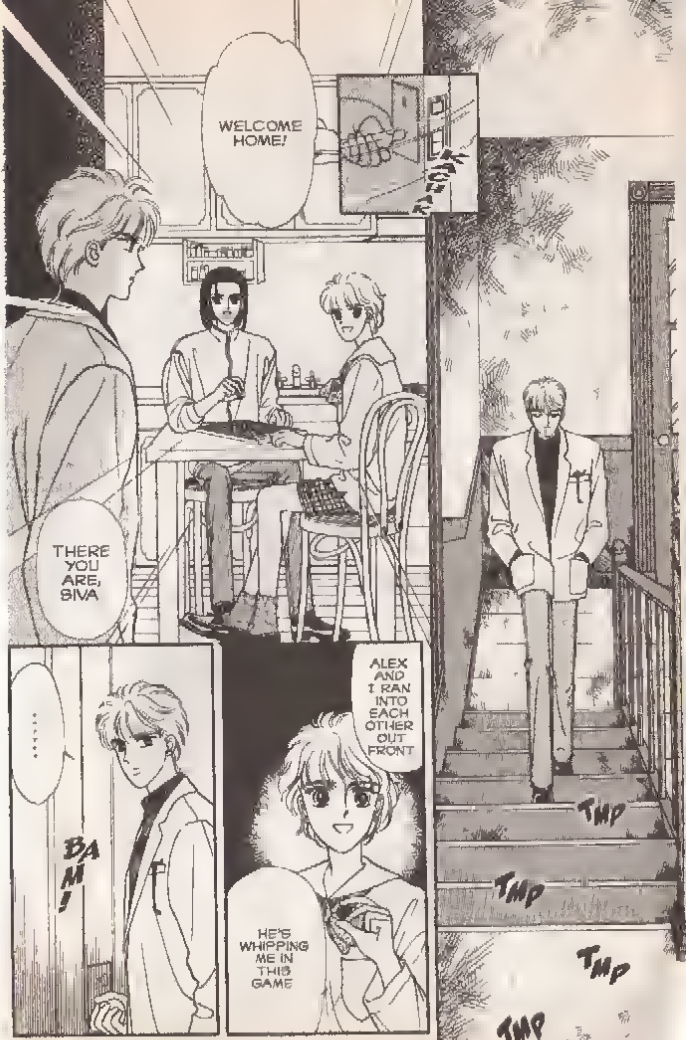

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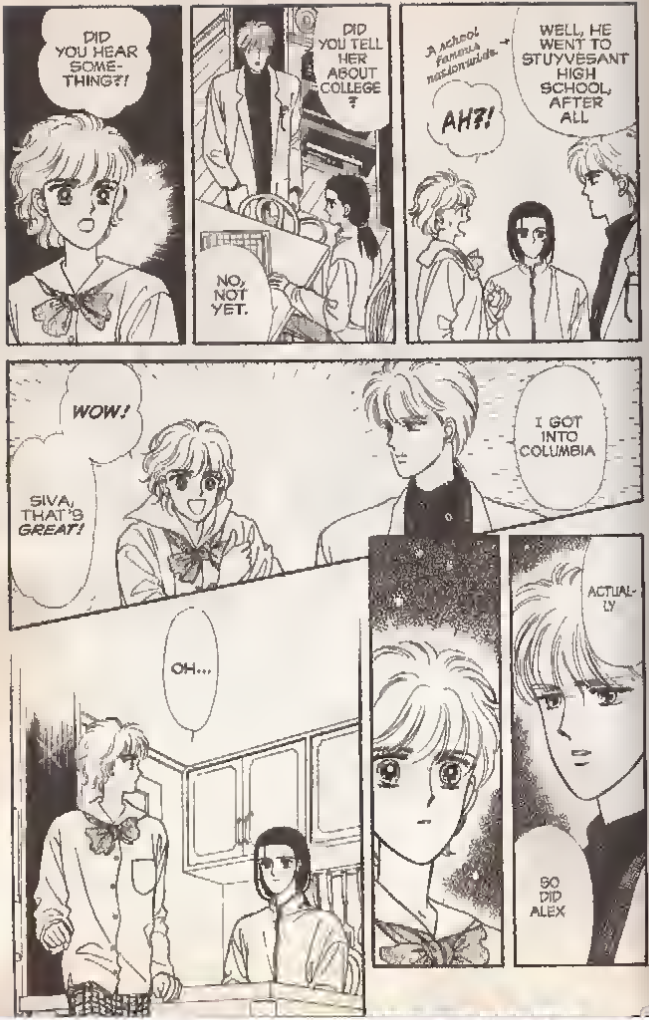

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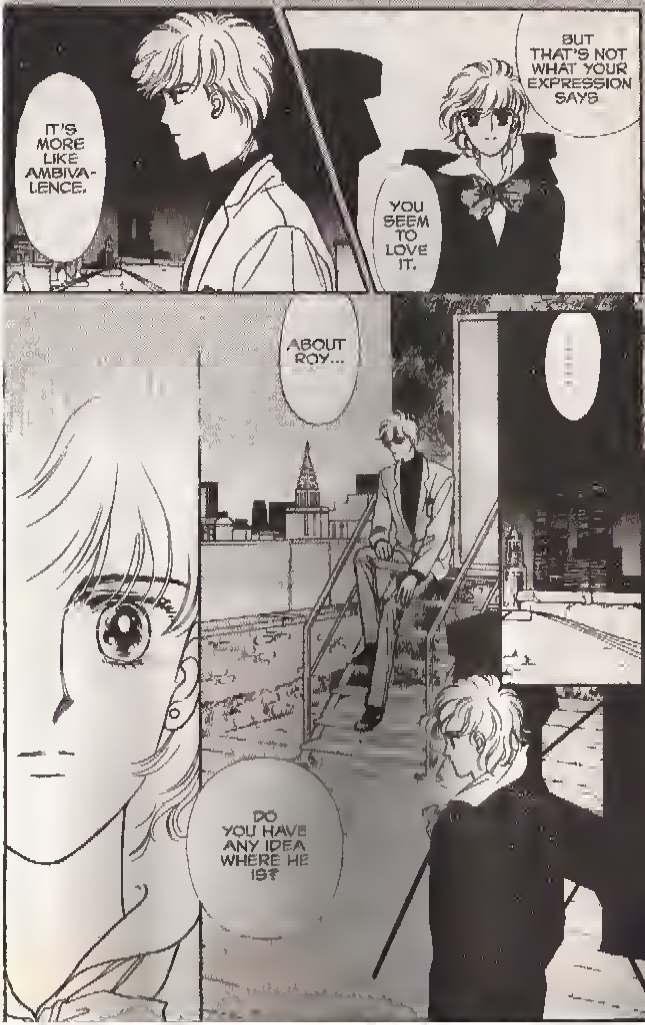
IT'S MORE LIKE AMBIVA-LENCE.
YOU SEEM TO LOVE IT.
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT YOUR EXPRESSION SAYS
ABOUT ROY...
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE HE IS?

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WH-WHY...
WHY ARE YOU ASKING *ME* THAT?
KNOWING HIS PERSONALITY...
I ASSUME HE EVEN STOPPED CONTACTING YOU TOO, DIDN'T HE?
GO FIND HIM.
DON'T LET ME HOLD YOU BACK.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, SIVA?
DON'T *YOU* WANT TO SEE HIM?

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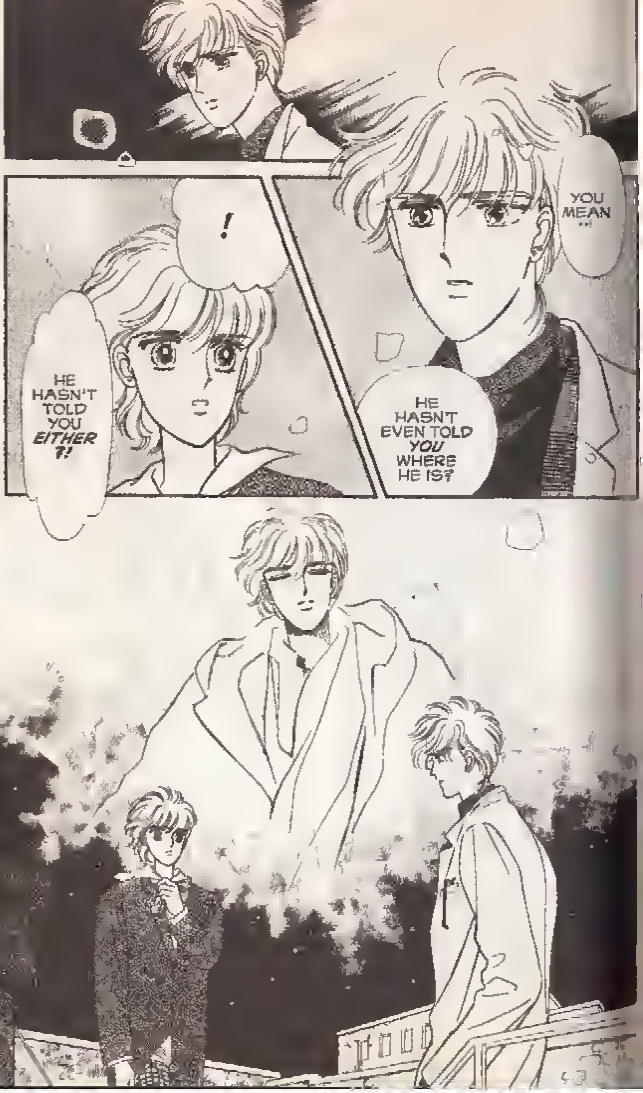

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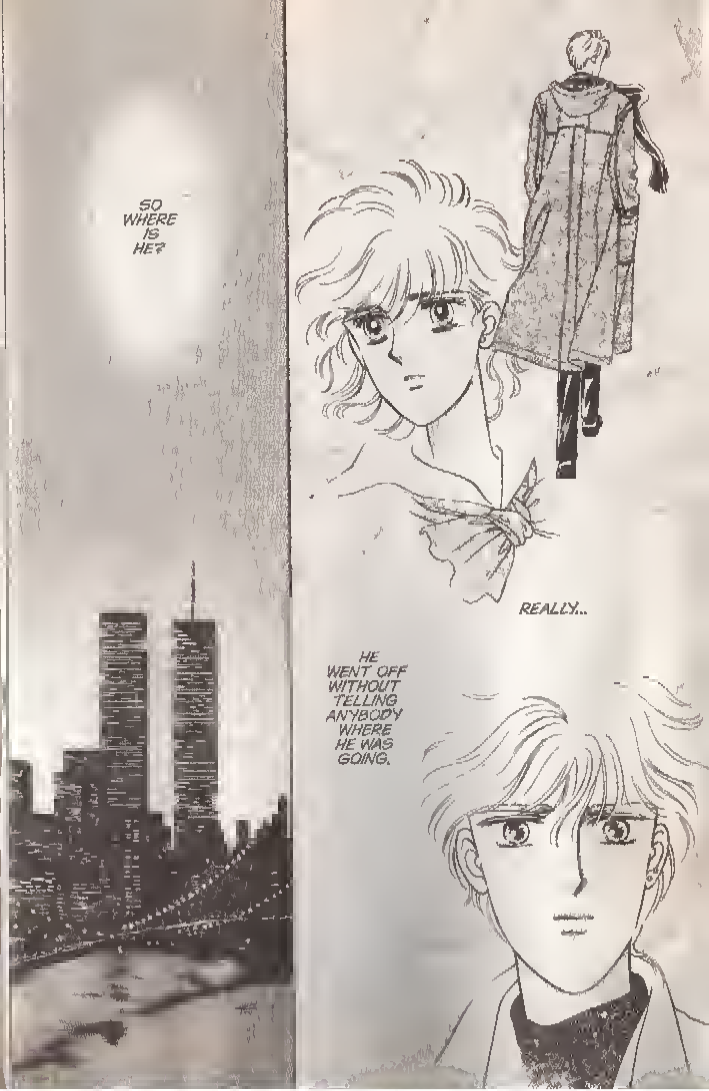

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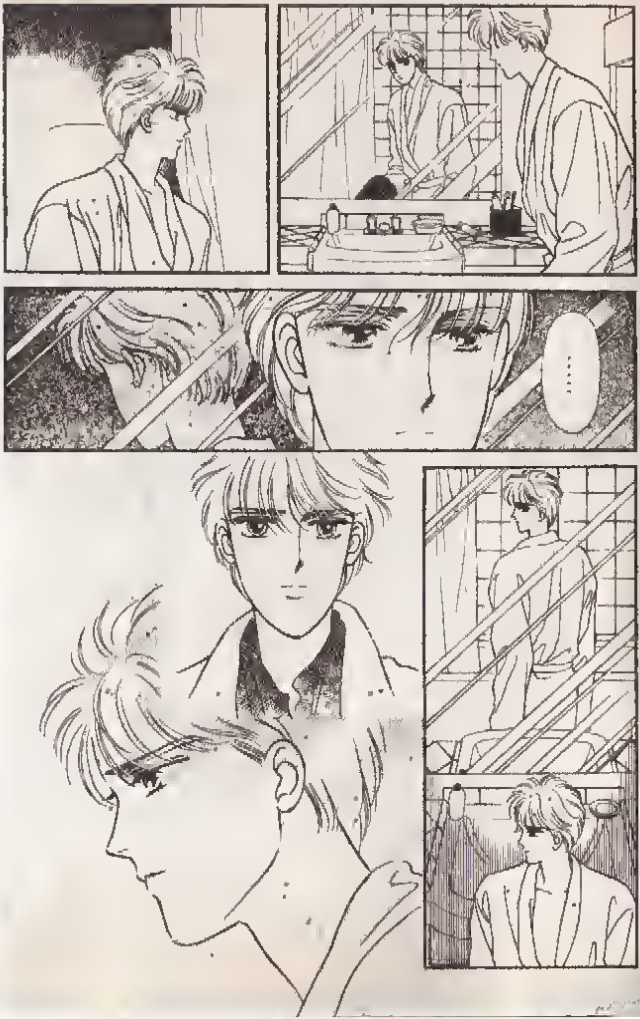

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NARCIS-SIST
Got smacked by Siva
GEEZ... YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET SO MAD!
I WAS JUST SAYING GOOD MORNING TO SIVA.
YOU STILL KISS YOUR BROTHER AT THIS AGE?
WHAT, YOUR TWIN BROTHER?
PERVERT

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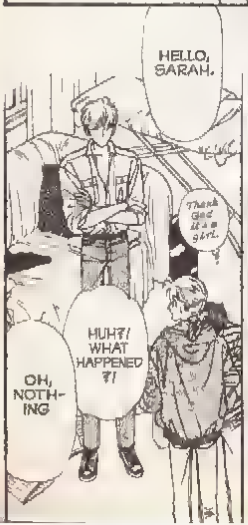

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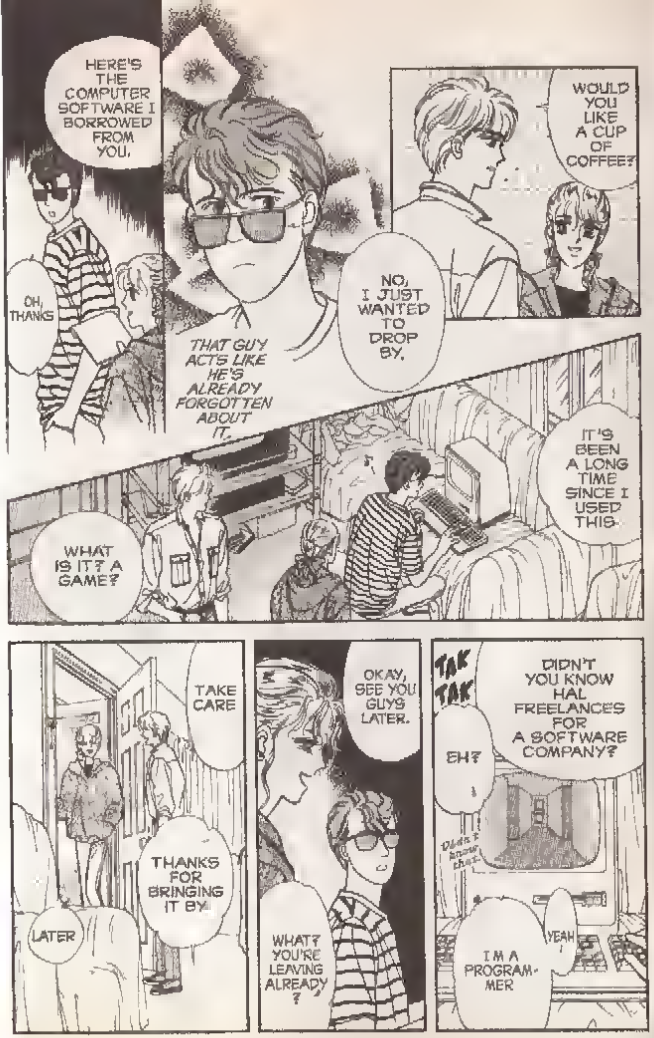
HERE'S THE COMPUTER SOFTWARE I BORROWED FROM YOU.
OH, THANKS
THAT GUY ACTS LIKE HE'S ALREADY FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT.
NO, I JUST WANTED TO DROP BY.
WOULD YOU LIKE A CUP OF COFFEE?
WHAT IS IT? A GAME?
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I USED THIS.
TAKE CARE
LATER
THANKS FOR BRINGING IT BY.
OKAY, SEE YOU GUYS LATER.
WHAT? YOU'RE LEAVING ALREADY?
TAK TAK
EH?
DIDN'T YOU KNOW HAL FREELANCES FOR A SOFTWARE COMPANY?
I DON'T KNOW THAT.
I'M A PROGRAM-MER
YEAH

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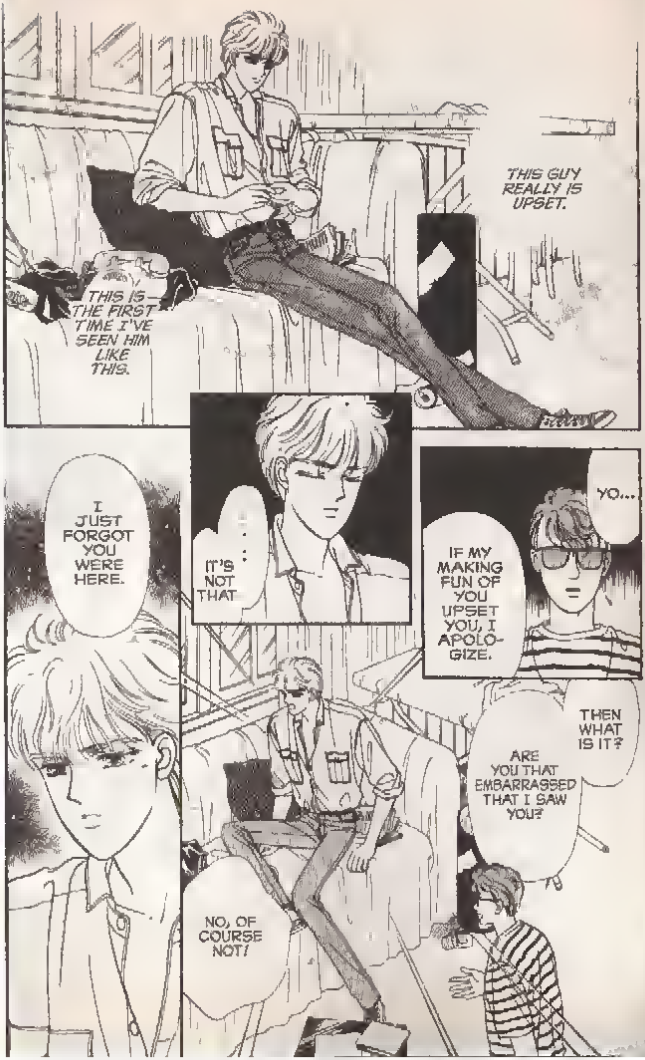
THIS GUY REALLY IS UPSET.
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN HIM LIKE THIS.
IT'S NOT THAT...
I JUST FORGOT YOU WERE HERE.
YO...
IF MY MAKING FUN OF YOU UPSET YOU, I APOLOGIZE.
THEN WHAT IS IT?
ARE YOU THAT EMBARRASSED THAT I SAW YOU?
NO, OF COURSE NOT!

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YOU'RE A HORRIBLE PERSON.
YOU FORGOT... I WAS AROUND?
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU!
HA!, I'VE BEEN IN FRONT OF PEOPLE EVER SINCE I WAS TEN MONTHS OLD!
UNTIL NOW, I'VE LIVED MY WHOLE LIFE CONSCIOUS OF OTHERS' GAZE!

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WAIT... DON'T GET SO SERIOUS YOU...
EVEN IN FRONT OF MY FAMILY...
AND ESPECIALLY IN FRONT OF JAKE
YEAH... I AM GETTING SERIOUS.
WHAT AM I DOING?

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"DON'T LOOK AT ME!"
"YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN MORE THOUGHTFUL, DUMMY!"
MAYBE...
HE'S LOST THE ABILITY TO MASK HIMSELF IN FRONT OF ME?
WHOA... HE'S GETTING SHY.
IT'S NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF.

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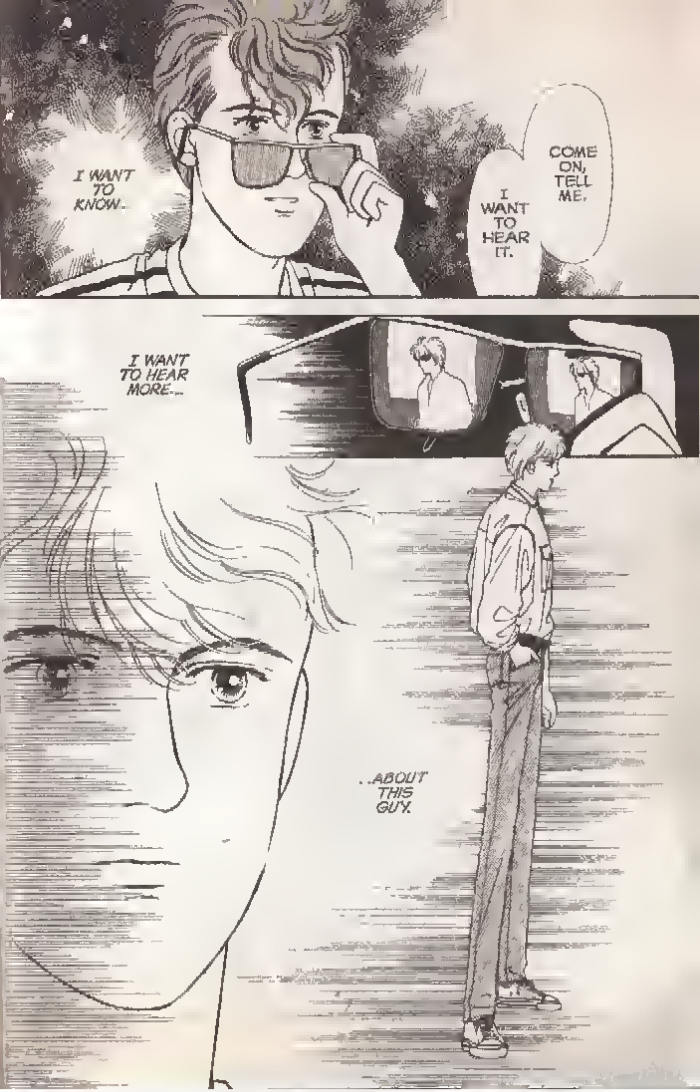

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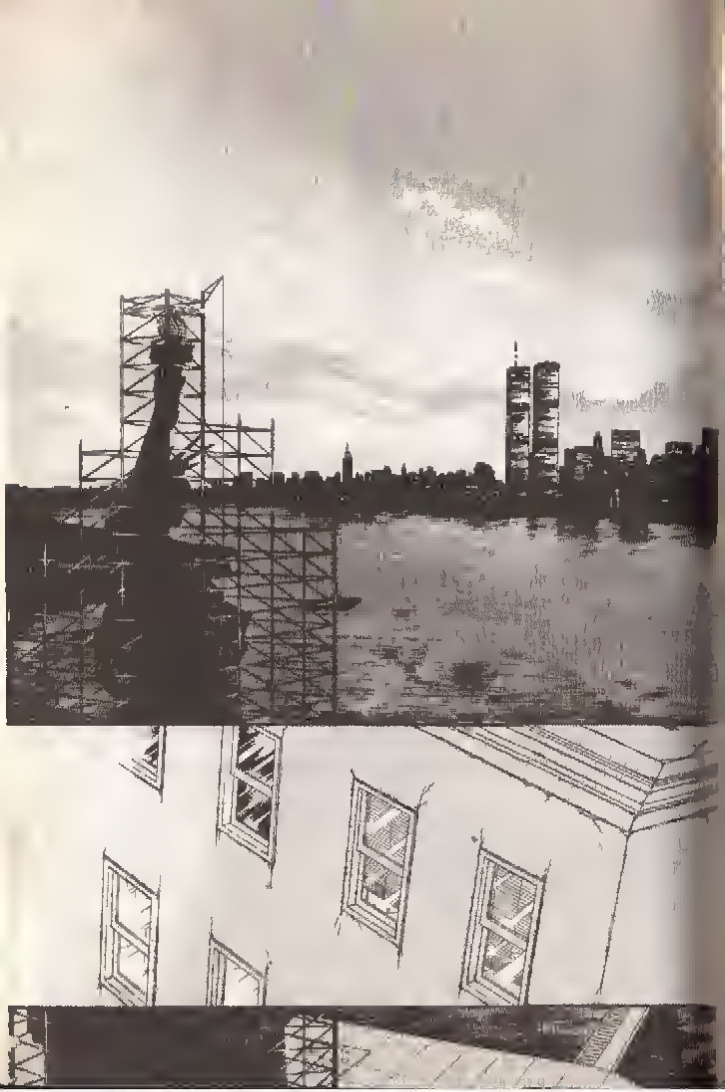

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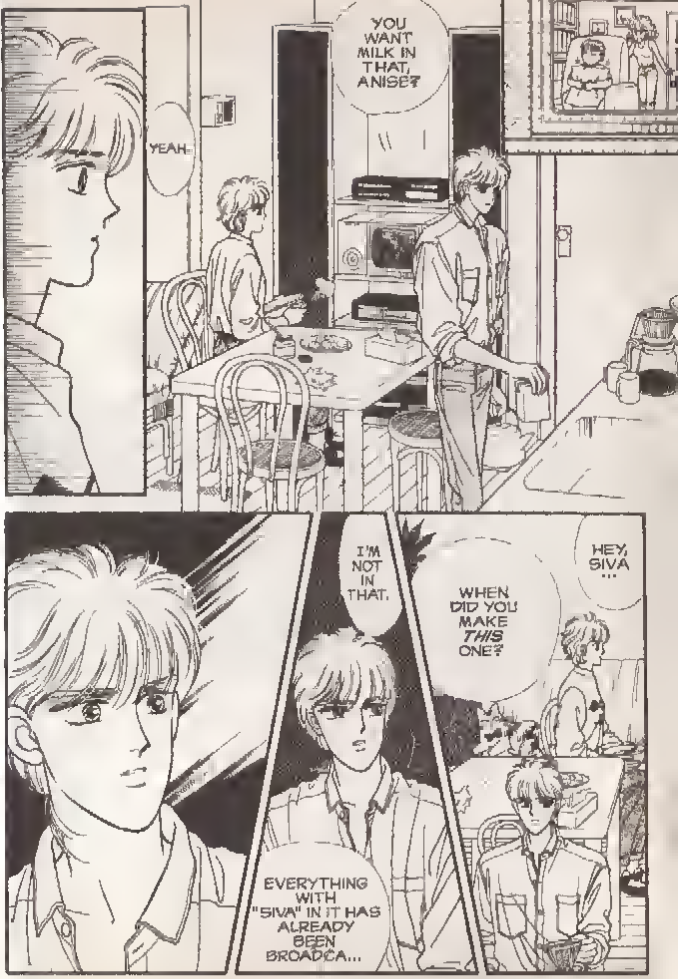
YEAH.
YOU WANT MILK IN THAT, ANISE?
HEY, SIVA ...
WHEN DID YOU MAKE THIS ONE?
I'M NOT IN THAT.
EVERYTHING WITH "SIVA" IN IT HAS ALREADY BEEN BROADCA...

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WE WENT THROUGH A LOT AT FIRST, BUT NOW I'VE GOT NO PROBLEM WITH THIS GUY
IT'S CLEAR WHAT IS HIS TERRITORY AND WHAT IS MINE.
IF HE'S GOING OUT WITH SOME PEOPLE I'M FRIENDS WITH, HE ALWAYS LETS ME KNOW.
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'D ONLY EVER LIVED WITH YOUR FAMILY RIGHT UP UNTIL JUST BEFORE WE MET.
IF I ASK HIM FOR SOMETHING, HE GIVES IT GLADLY, OR ELSE HE CLEARLY SAYS HE CAN'T
HE DOESN'T RELY ON ME TOO MUCH OR TAKE CARE OF ME TOO MUCH.

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THE MOTHER OF CHILD ACTORS STICKS WITH THEM ALL THE TIME
BUT I GUESS YOU'RE NOT USUAL.
YEAH, I SUP-POSE.
USUALLY, NOBODY HAS TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT THINGS AROUND THEIR FAMILY, RIGHT?
WE CONSCIOUSLY TAKE A POSE IN FRONT OF THEM MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE.
BUT FOR A CHILD, THEY'RE THE MOST IMPORTANT AUDIENCE
MAYBE IT'S A LITTLE OVER-PROTEC-TIVE...
IT SEEMS HE OUGHT TO BE YOUR ALLY.
AND YOUR BROTH-ER?

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BUT HE WAS ALSO A RIVAL.
YEAH ... HE WAS AN ALLY.
NO, EVERY-THING.
WHAT, YOU MEAN ABOUT WORK?
JAKE WAS ALWAYS THE SUPERIOR STUDENT, AND THE PRIDE OF OUR PARENTS.
WHEN I'M WITH JAKE, I FEEL THE MOST STRESS.
I WANTED TO BE SEEN AS DIFFERENT FROM HIM-
BE-CAUSE WE WERE TWINS

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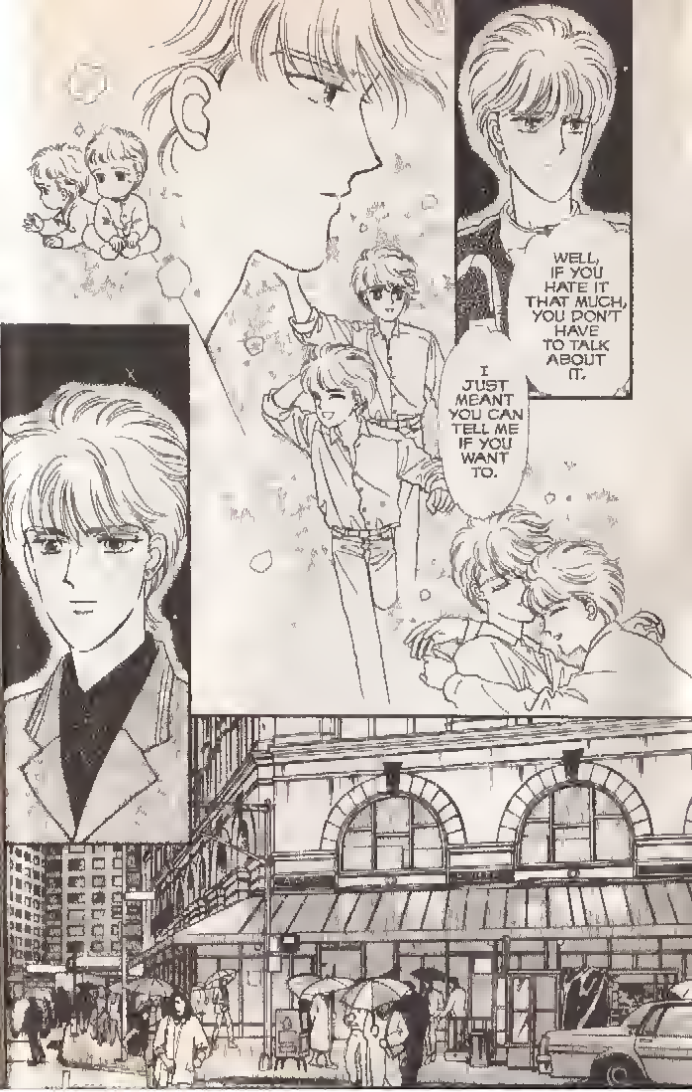

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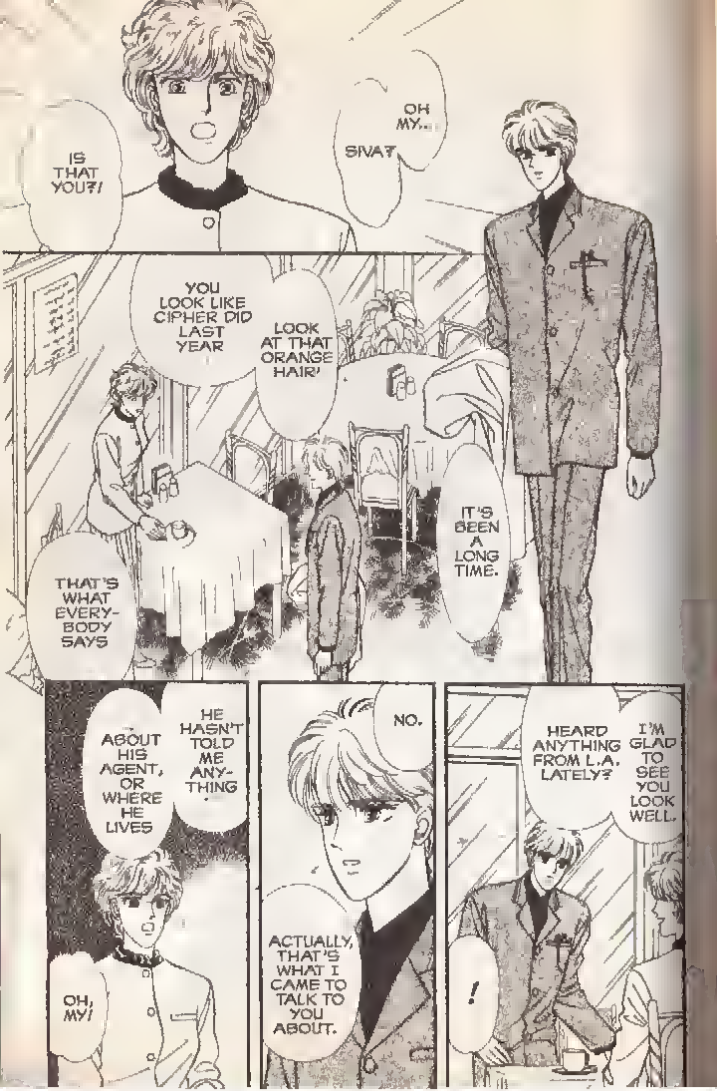
IS THAT YOU?!
OH MY... SIVA?
YOU LOOK LIKE CIPHER DID LAST YEAR
LOOK AT THAT ORANGE HAIR!
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
THAT'S WHAT EVERY-BODY SAYS
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU LOOK WELL.
HEARD ANYTHING FROM L.A. LATELY?
!
NO.
ACTUALLY, THAT'S WHAT I CAME TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.
HE HASN'T TOLD ME ANY-THING
ABOUT HIS AGENT, OR WHERE HE LIVES
OH, MY!

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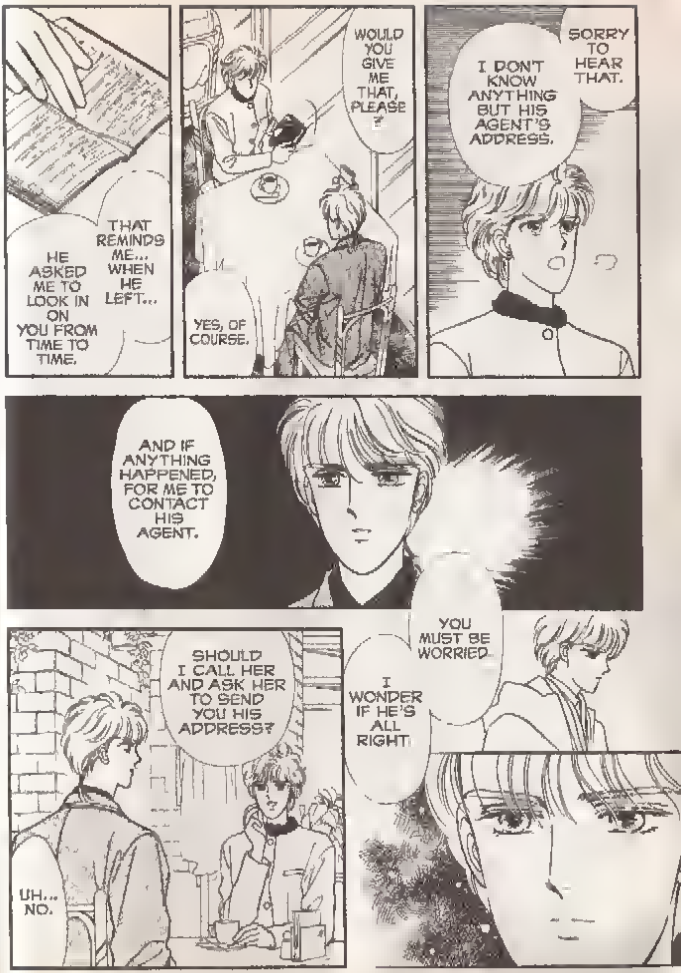
HE ASKED ME TO LOOK IN ON YOU FROM TIME TO TIME.
THAT REMINDS ME... WHEN HE LEFT...
WOULD YOU GIVE ME THAT, PLEASE?
YES, OF COURSE.
SORRY TO HEAR THAT.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING BUT HIS AGENT'S ADDRESS.
AND IF ANYTHING HAPPENED, FOR ME TO CONTACT HIS AGENT.
SHOULD I CALL HER AND ASK HER TO SEND YOU HIS ADDRESS?
UH... NO.
YOU MUST BE WORRIED.
I WONDER IF HE'S ALL RIGHT.

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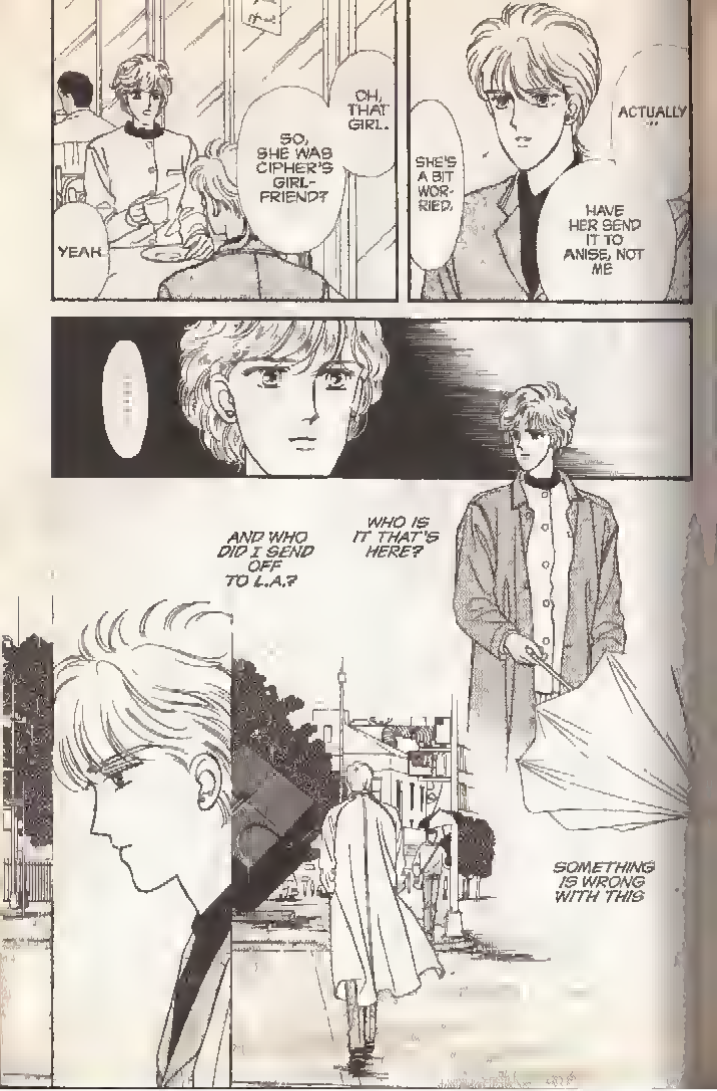
OH, THAT GIRL.
SO, SHE WAS CIPHER'S GIRL-FRIEND?
YEAH.
ACTUALLY ...
SHE'S A BIT WOR-RIED.
HAVE HER SEND IT TO ANISE, NOT ME
AND WHO DID I SEND OFF TO L.A.?
WHO IS IT THAT'S HERE?
SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THIS

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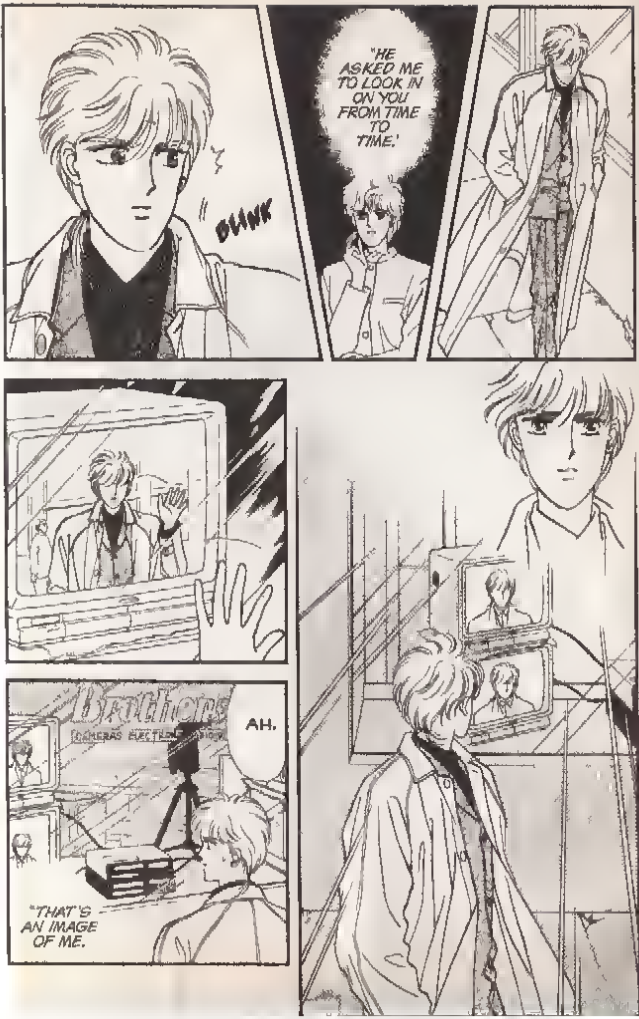

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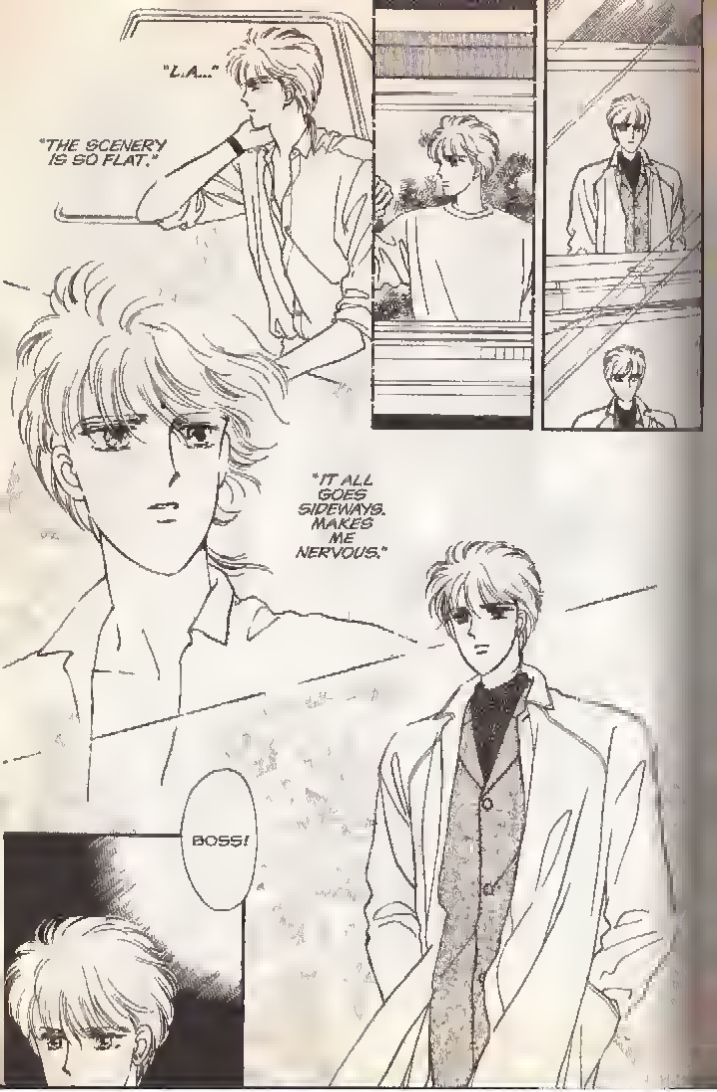

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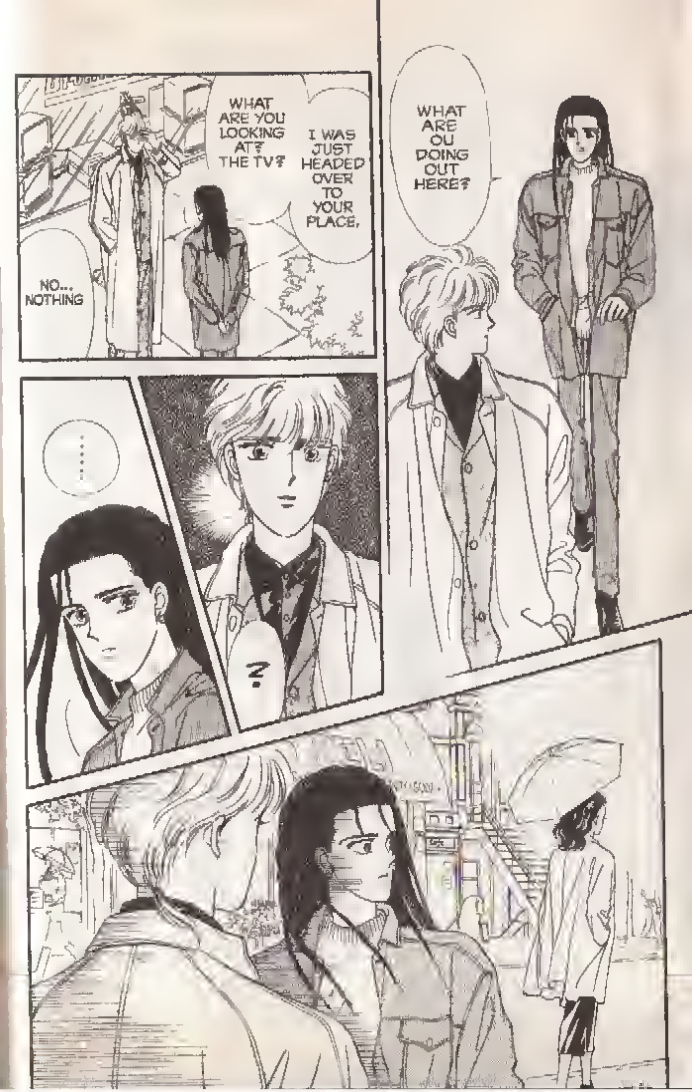

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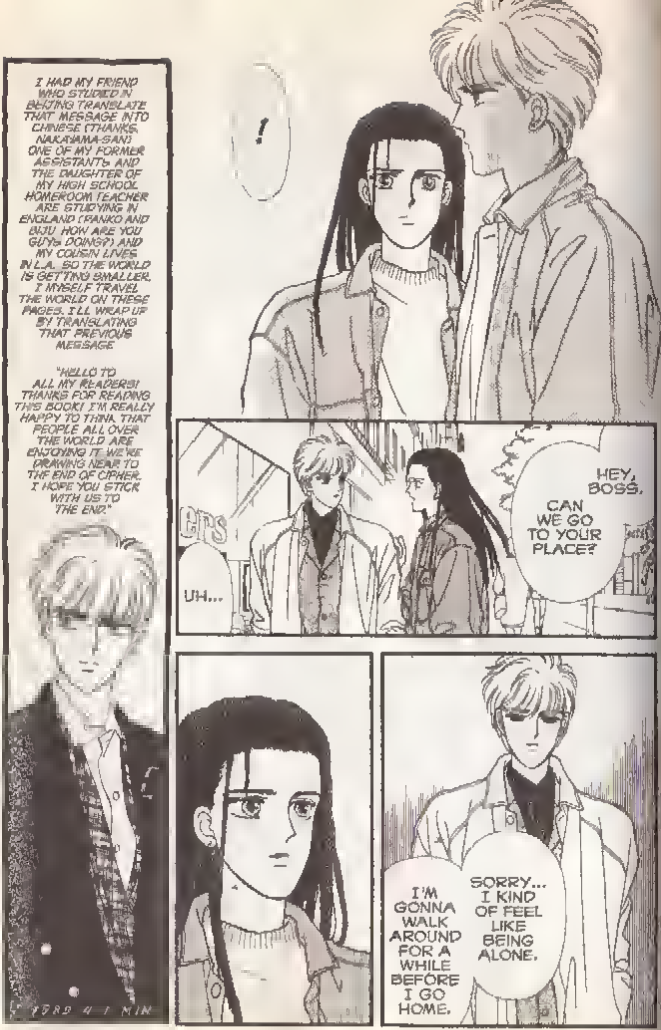
I HAD MY FRIEND WHO STUDIED IN BEIJING TRANSLATE THAT MESSAGE INTO CHINESE (THANKS, NAKAMA-SAN!) ONE OF MY FORMER ASSISTANTS AND THE DAUGHTER OF MY HIGH SCHOOL HOMEROOM TEACHER ARE STUDYING IN ENGLAND (KANKO AND EIJU, HOW ARE YOU GUYS DOING?) AND MY COUSIN LIVES IN L.A., SO THE WORLD IS GETTING SMALLER. I MYSELF TRAVEL THE WORLD ON THESE PAGES. I'LL WRAP UP BY TRANSLATING THAT PREVIOUS MESSAGE.
"HELLO TO ALL MY READERS! THANKS FOR READING THIS BOOK! I'M REALLY HAPPY TO THINK THAT PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE ENJOYING IT. WE'RE DRAWING NEAR TO THE END OF CIPHER. I HOPE YOU STICK WITH US TO THE END."
!
HEY, BOSS. CAN WE GO TO YOUR PLACE?
UH...
I'M GONNA WALK AROUND FOR A WHILE BEFORE I GO HOME.
SORRY... I KIND OF FEEL LIKE BEING ALONE.

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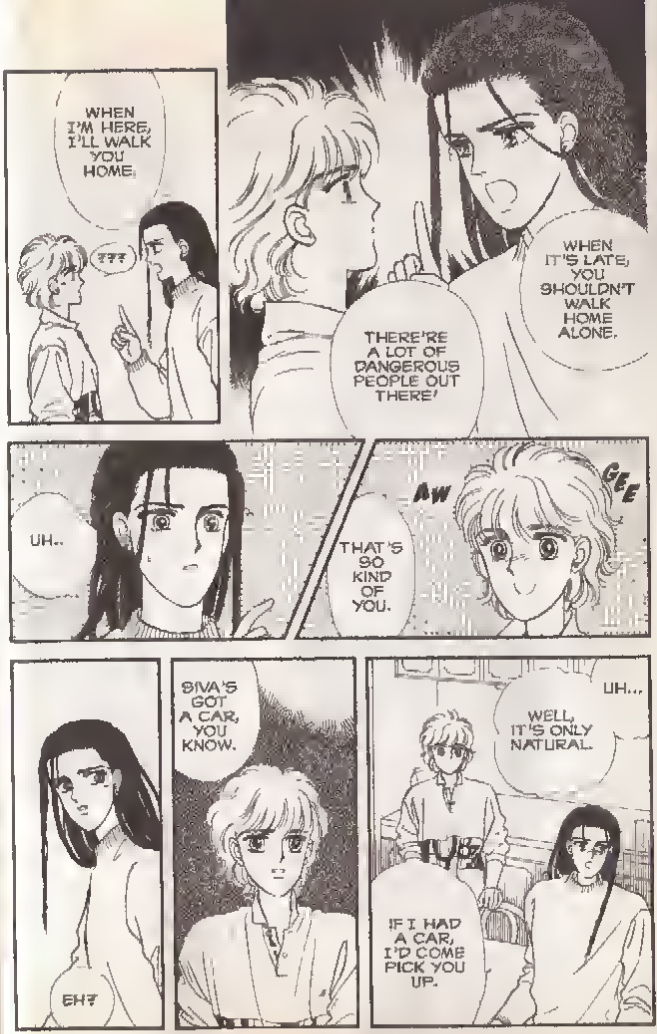
WHEN I'M HERE, I'LL WALK YOU HOME.
???
WHEN IT'S LATE, YOU SHOULDN'T WALK HOME ALONE.
THERE'RE A LOT OF DANGEROUS PEOPLE OUT THERE!
UH..
AW
GEE
THAT'S SO KIND OF YOU.
EH?
SIVA'S GOT A CAR, YOU KNOW.
UH...
WELL, IT'S ONLY NATURAL.
IF I HAD A CAR, I'D COME PICK YOU UP.

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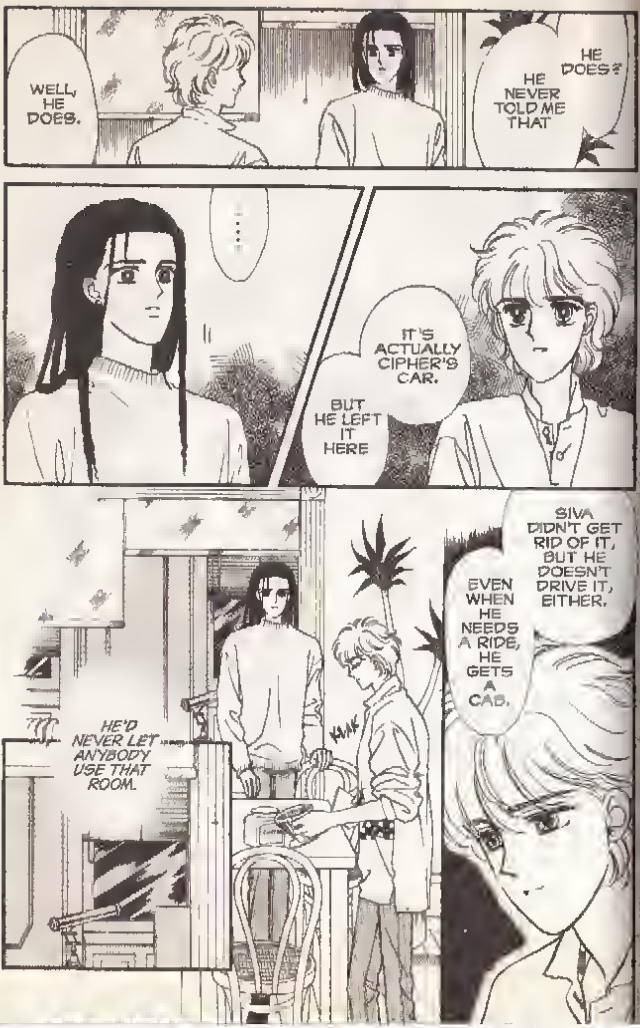
WELL, HE DOES.
HE NEVER TOLD ME THAT
HE DOES?
...
IT'S ACTUALLY CIPHER'S CAR.
BUT HE LEFT IT HERE
SIVA DIDN'T GET RID OF IT, BUT HE DOESN'T DRIVE IT, EITHER.
EVEN WHEN HE NEEDS A RIDE, HE GETS A CAB.
HE'D NEVER LET ANYBODY USE THAT ROOM.
KNK

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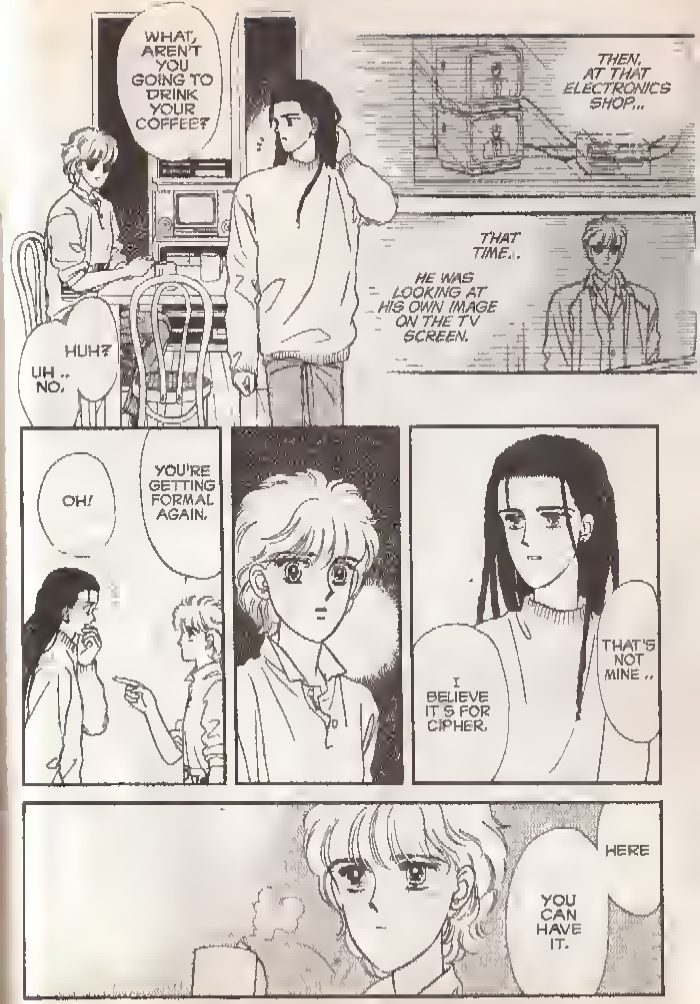
WHAT, AREN'T YOU GOING TO DRINK YOUR COFFEE?
HUH? UH.. NO.
THEN, AT THAT ELECTRONICS SHOP...
THAT TIME..
HE WAS LOOKING AT HIS OWN IMAGE ON THE TV SCREEN.
OH!
YOU'RE GETTING FORMAL AGAIN.
I BELIEVE IT'S FOR CIPHER.
THAT'S NOT MINE..
HERE
YOU CAN HAVE IT.

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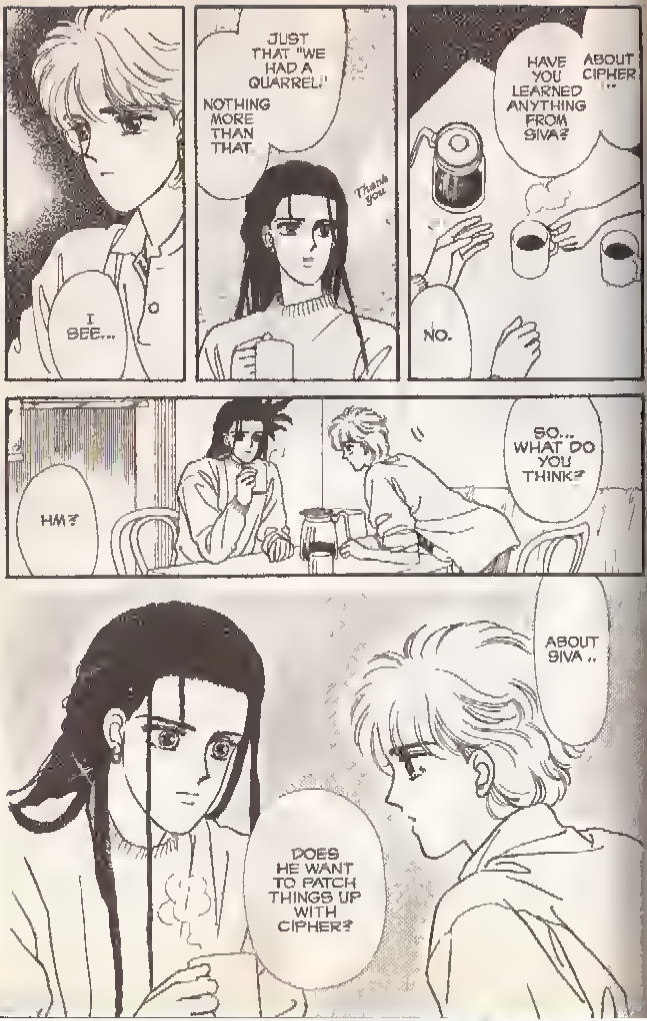
I SEE...
JUST THAT "WE HAD A QUARREL." NOTHING MORE THAN THAT.
Thank you.
HAVE YOU LEARNED ANYTHING FROM SIVA?
ABOUT CIPHER ..
NO.
HM?
SO... WHAT DO YOU THINK?
ABOUT SIVA ..
DOES HE WANT TO PATCH THINGS UP WITH CIPHER?

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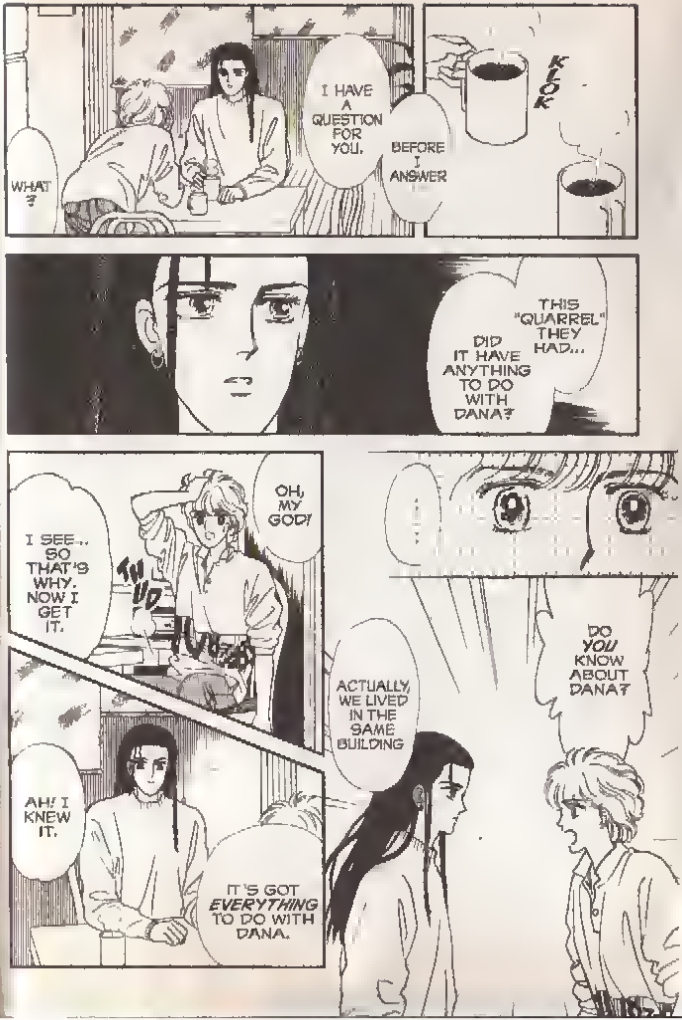
WHAT?
I HAVE A QUESTION FOR YOU.
BEFORE I ANSWER
KLOK
THIS "QUARREL" THEY HAD...
DID IT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH DANA?
OH, MY GOD!
I SEE... SO THAT'S WHY. NOW I GET IT.
AH! I KNEW IT.
IT'S GOT EVERYTHING TO DO WITH DANA.
ACTUALLY, WE LIVED IN THE SAME BUILDING
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DANA?

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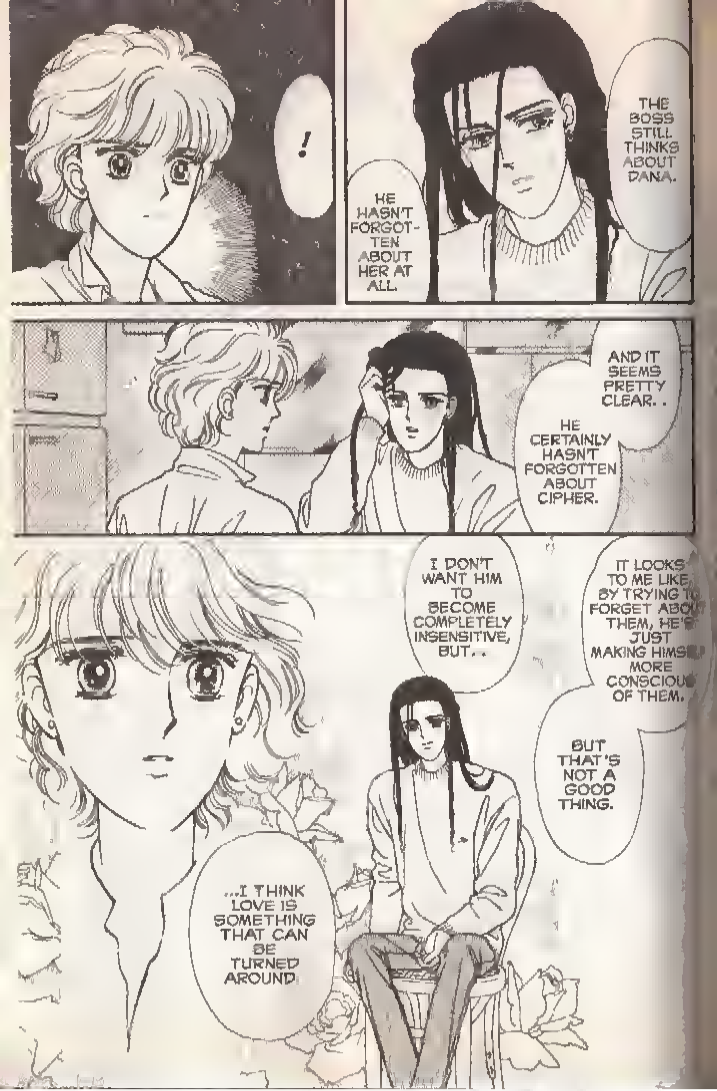
!
HE HASN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT HER AT ALL.
THE BOSS STILL THINKS ABOUT DANA.
AND IT SEEMS PRETTY CLEAR..
HE CERTAINLY HASN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT CIPHER.
I DON'T WANT HIM TO BECOME COMPLETELY INSENSITIVE, BUT..
IT LOOKS TO ME LIKE BY TRYING TO FORGET ABOUT THEM, HE'S JUST MAKING HIMSELF MORE CONSCIOUS OF THEM.
BUT THAT'S NOT A GOOD THING.
...I THINK LOVE IS SOMETHING THAT CAN BE TURNED AROUND.

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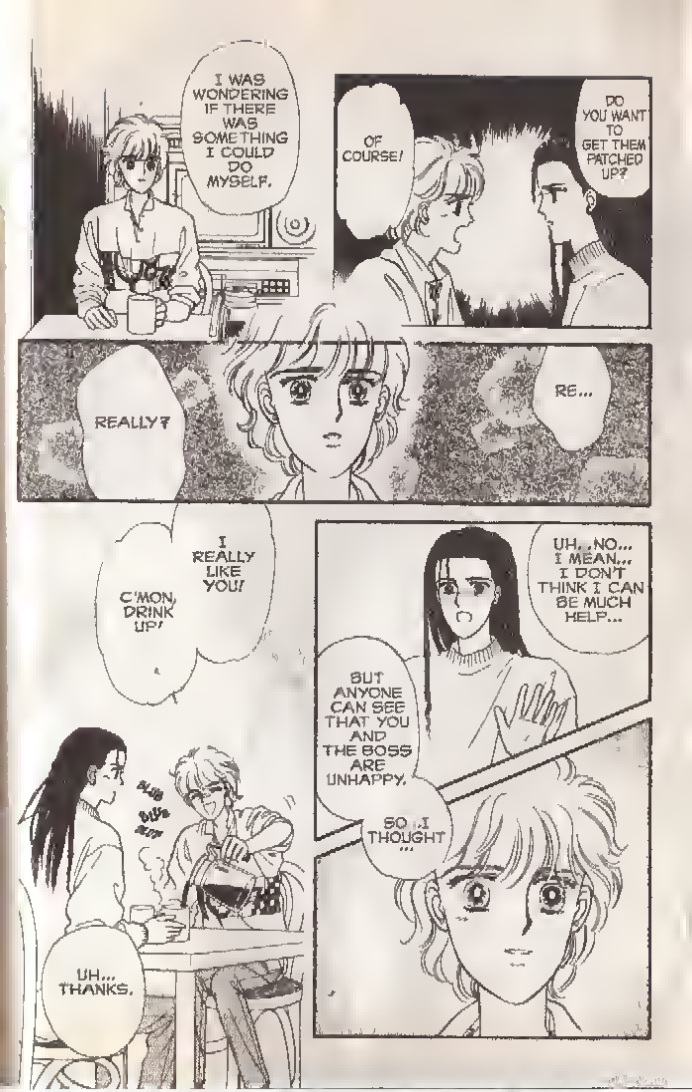
I WAS WONDERING IF THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULD DO MYSELF.
OF COURSE!
DO YOU WANT TO GET THEM PATCHED UP?
REALLY?
RE...
I REALLY LIKE YOU!
C'MON, DRINK UP!
UH... NO... I MEAN... I DON'T THINK I CAN BE MUCH HELP...
BUT ANYONE CAN SEE THAT YOU AND THE BOSS ARE UNHAPPY.
SO I THOUGHT ...
UH... THANKS.

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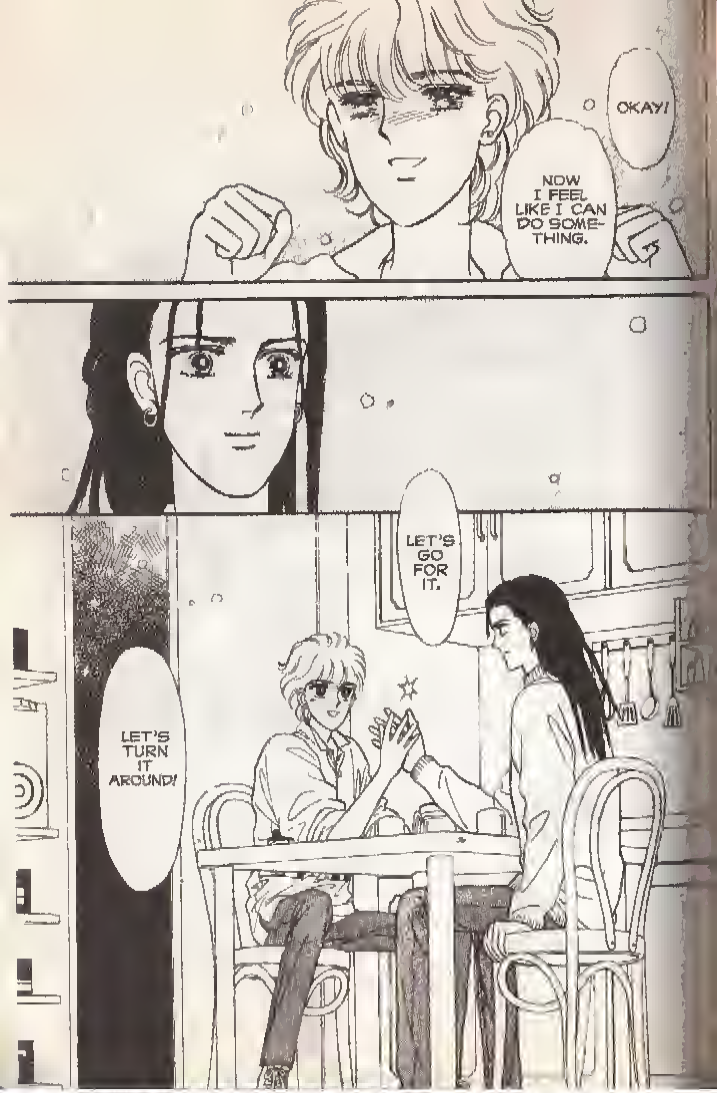

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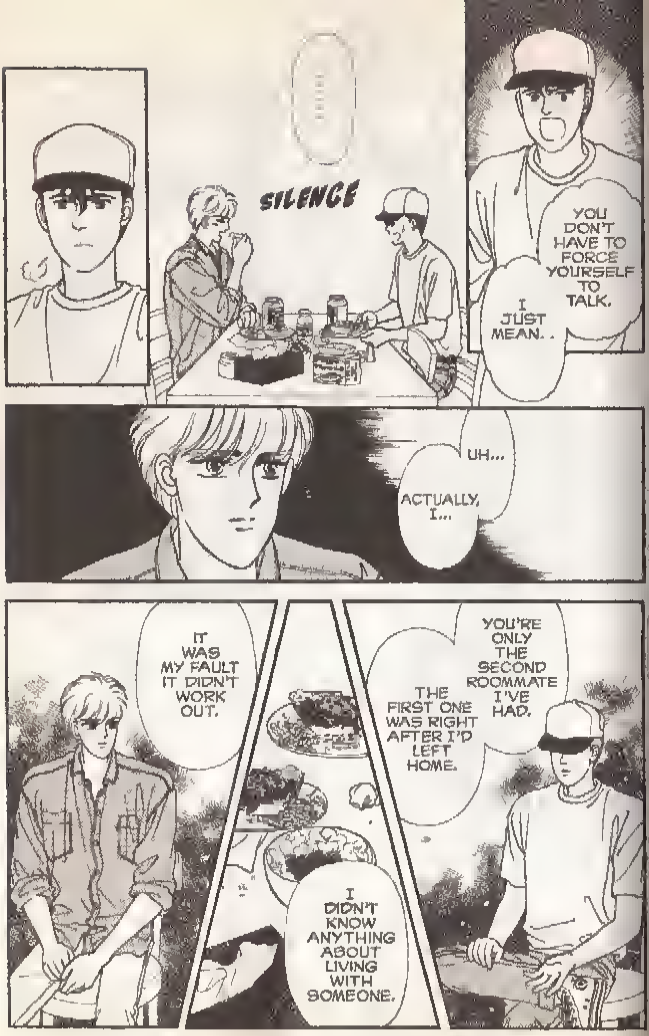
SILENCE
I JUST MEAN..
YOU DON'T HAVE TO FORCE YOURSELF TO TALK.
UH...
ACTUALLY, I...
IT WAS MY FAULT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT.
I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT LIVING WITH SOMEONE.
THE FIRST ONE WAS RIGHT AFTER I'D LEFT HOME.
YOU'RE ONLY THE SECOND ROOMMATE I'VE HAD.

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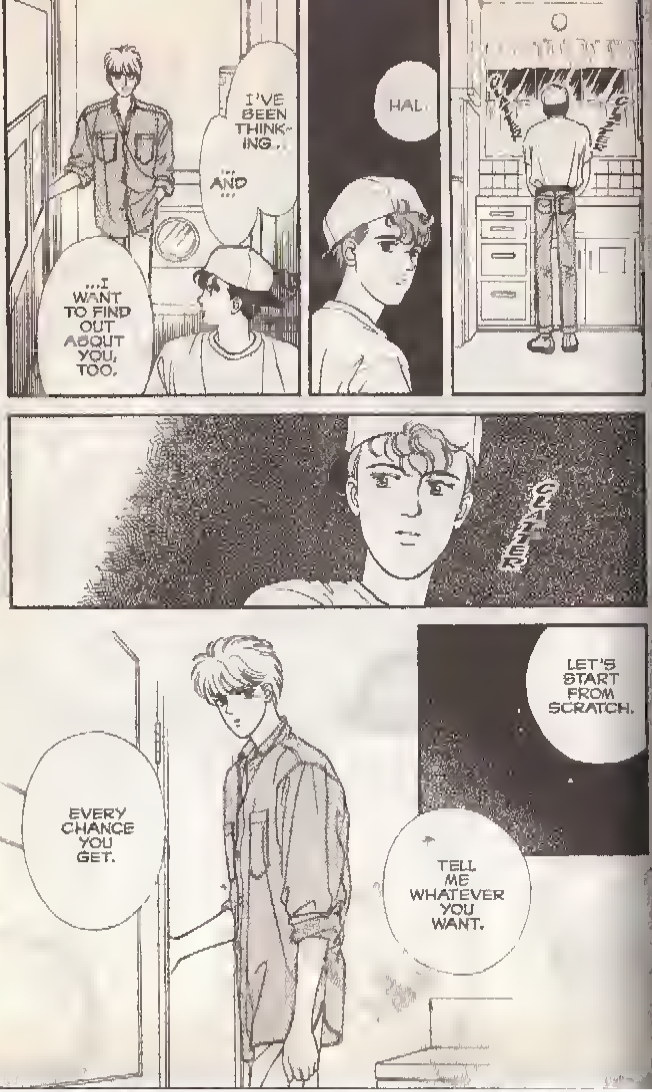

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CIPHER

Scene 11: RIPTIDE

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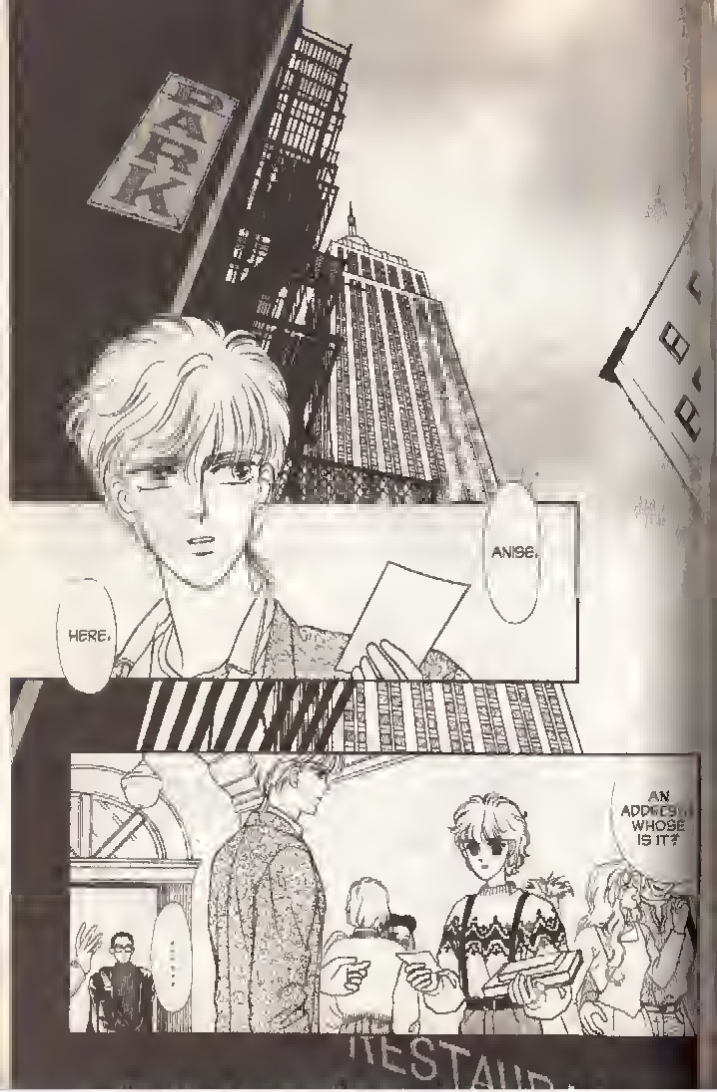

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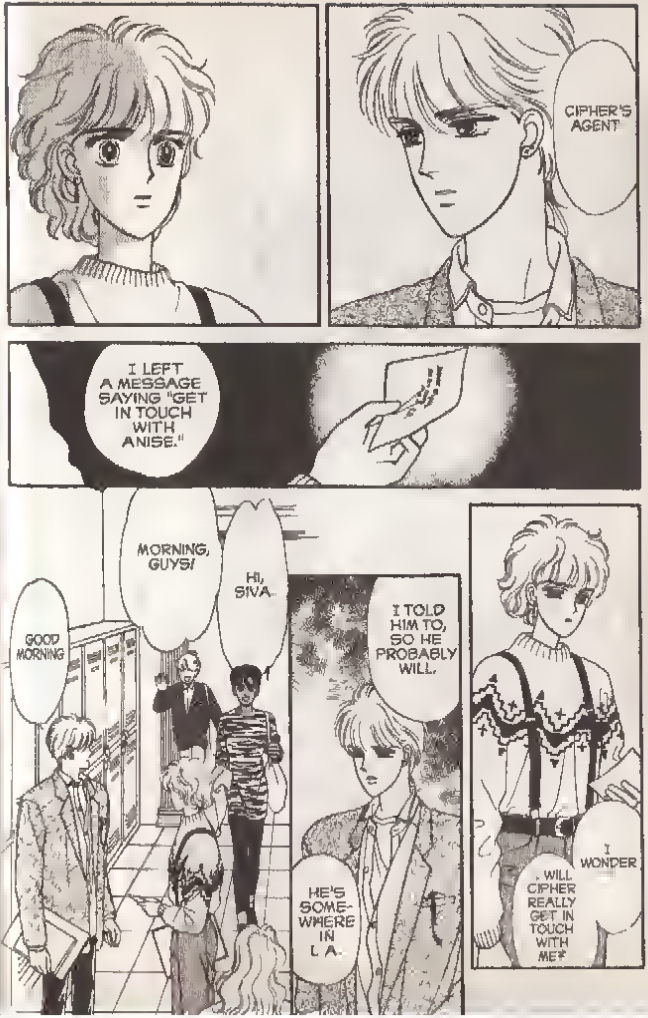
CIPHER'S AGENT.
I LEFT A MESSAGE SAYING "GET IN TOUCH WITH ANISE."
MORNING, GUYS!
HI, SIVA.
GOOD MORNING
I TOLD HIM TO, SO HE PROBABLY WILL.
HE'S SOMEWHERE IN L.A.
I WONDER
WILL CIPHER REALLY GET IN TOUCH WITH ME?

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YOU GOT CIPHER'S ADDRESS ?!
Caffe N-POLI Espresso
LET ME KNOW IF YOU DON'T HEAR ANYTHING.
LATER!
WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
HERE'S ALL THE LATEST DATA ON CIPHER.
I FOUND OUT A LOT OF STUFF, TOO.
NO, JUST HIS AGENT'S.
WELL, THAT'S BETTER THAN NOTHING.

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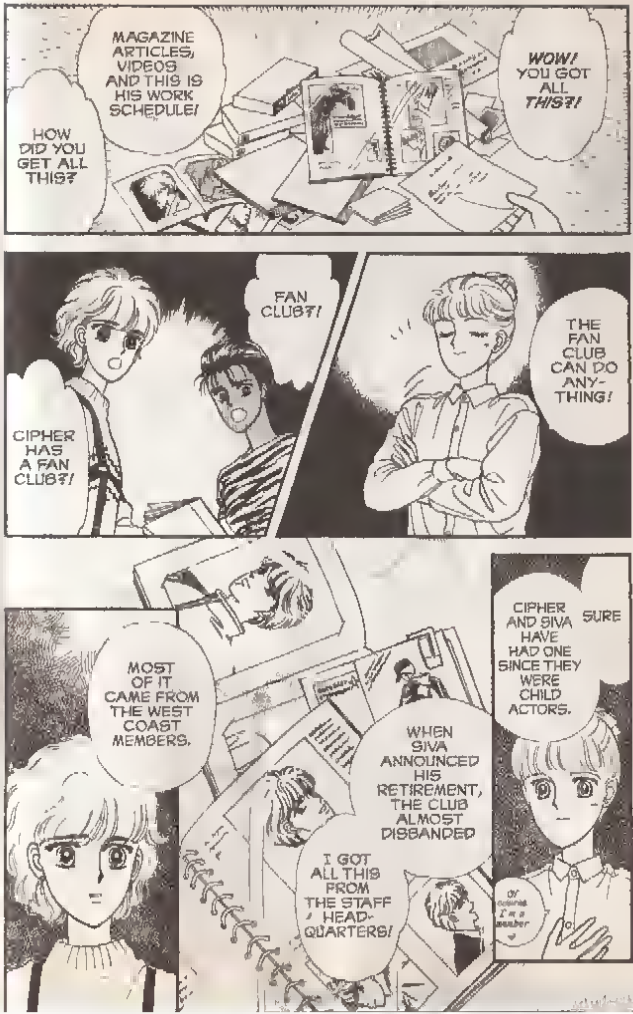
MAGAZINE ARTICLES, VIDEOS AND THIS IS HIS WORK SCHEDULE!
HOW DID YOU GET ALL THIS?
WOW! YOU GOT ALL THIS?!
FAN CLUB?!
CIPHER HAS A FAN CLUB?!
THE FAN CLUB CAN DO ANY-THING!
MOST OF IT CAME FROM THE WEST COAST MEMBERS.
I GOT ALL THIS FROM THE STAFF HEAD-QUARTERS!
WHEN SIVA ANNOUNCED HIS RETIREMENT, THE CLUB ALMOST DISBANDED
CIPHER AND SIVA HAVE HAD ONE SINCE THEY WERE CHILD ACTORS.
SURE
Of course I'm a member

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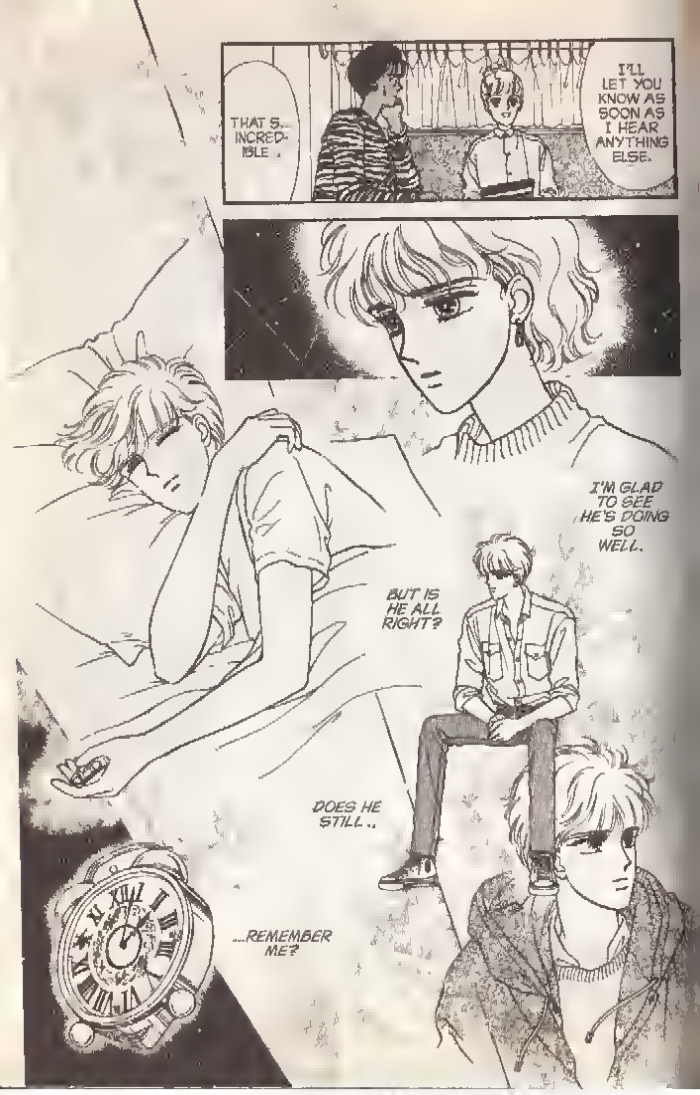
THAT S... INCRED-IBLE .
I'LL LET YOU KNOW AS SOON AS I HEAR ANYTHING ELSE.
I'M GLAD TO SEE HE'S DOING SO WELL.
BUT IS HE ALL RIGHT?
DOES HE STILL ..
...REMEMBER ME?

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WHAT?!
WHAT ARE YOU PACKING THIS OLD ALARM CLOCK FOR?
I'VE GOT ALL KINDS OF CLOCKS.
WELL ...
...THAT ONE'S DIFFERENT.
LARGE-SCREEN
1989
PFF
JUST LIKE IT, THAT'S ALL.
I GOT IT FROM MY DEAD GRAND-MOTHER
Y-YOU..
...YOU BROUGHT IT HERE JUST BECAUSE YOU LIKE IT?!
YOU'RE LIKE A KID WITH A STUFFED ANIMAL!

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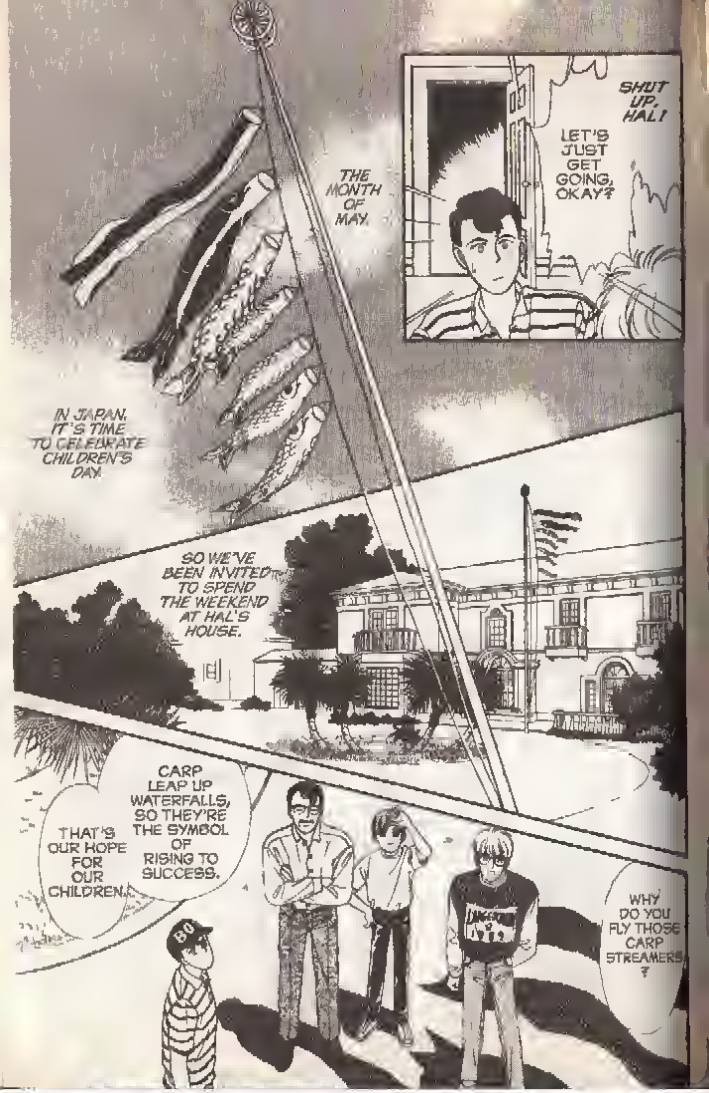
SHUT UP, HAL!
LET'S JUST GET GOING, OKAY?
THE MONTH OF MAY.
IN JAPAN, IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE CHILDREN'S DAY.
SO WE'VE BEEN INVITED TO SPEND THE WEEKEND AT HAL'S HOUSE.
CARP LEAP UP WATERFALLS, SO THEY'RE THE SYMBOL OF RISING TO SUCCESS.
THAT'S OUR HOPE FOR OUR CHILDREN.
WHY DO YOU FLY THOSE CARP STREAMERS?

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THAT ONE'S FOR YOU.
WAIT THERE'S ONE TOO MANY!
THEY REPRESENT OUR WHOLE FAMILY.
AT THE TOP IS THE FATHER, THEN THE MOTHER AND THE CHILDREN.
OH...
THANK YOU.
WE WANT YOU TO FEEL LIKE YOU RE ONE OF THE FAMILY.
OKAY
IT'S A BIG DINNER TONIGHT. YOU GOTTA WEAR A TIE.
WAY TO GO, DAD!

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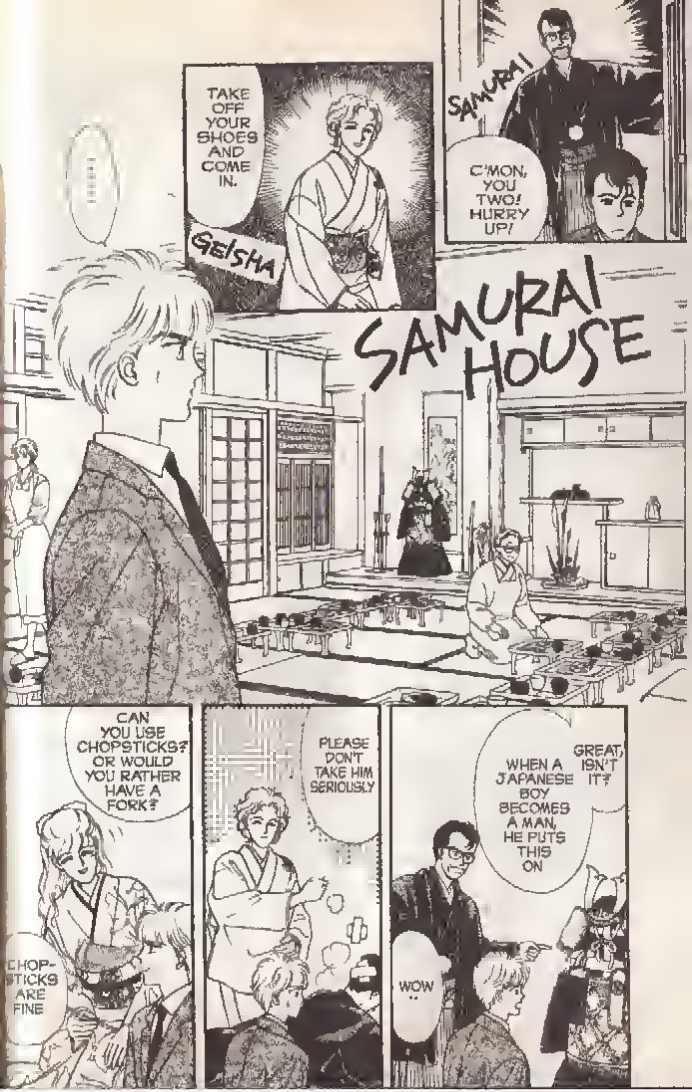
SAMURAI!
C'MON, YOU TWO! HURRY UP!
TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES AND COME IN.
GEISHA
SAMURAI HOUSE
CAN YOU USE CHOPSTICKS? OR WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE A FORK?
CHOP-STICKS ARE FINE
PLEASE DON'T TAKE HIM SERIOUSLY
WHEN A JAPANESE BOY BECOMES A MAN, HE PUTS THIS ON
GREAT, ISN'T IT?
WOW

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WELL, HE'S TAKEN A LIKING TO YOU.
BECAUSE YOU LOOK SO HONEST
Only at first, though.
BAM!
EVEN WITH THAT LOUD-MOUTHED, STUBBORN OLD MAN?
REALLY THINK SO?
HE'S A GOOD FATHER, ISN'T HE?
ADULTS HAVE THOUGHT I WAS CUTE EVER SINCE I WAS A KID.
YEAH, I CAN PICTURE THAT!
TELL ME...
..DO YOU THINK I'M CHILD-ISH?

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DON'T TELL ME...
YOU'RE STILL UPSET THAT I CALLED YOU A KID THIS AFTER-NOON?!
OH...
HUH? WHY?
JUST BECAUSE ADULTS LIKE YOU DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE CHILDISH.
YEAH. IT'S EVEN OKAY FOR AN ADULT TO BE LIKE THAT.
"CHILDISH" IS THE BAD ONE
It's like when girls call each other "cute."
YOU MEAN "LIKE A KID" IS BETTER?
OH, GIMME A BREAK.
SAYING SOMEONE IS "LIKE A KID" AND THAT THEY'RE "CHILDISH" ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!

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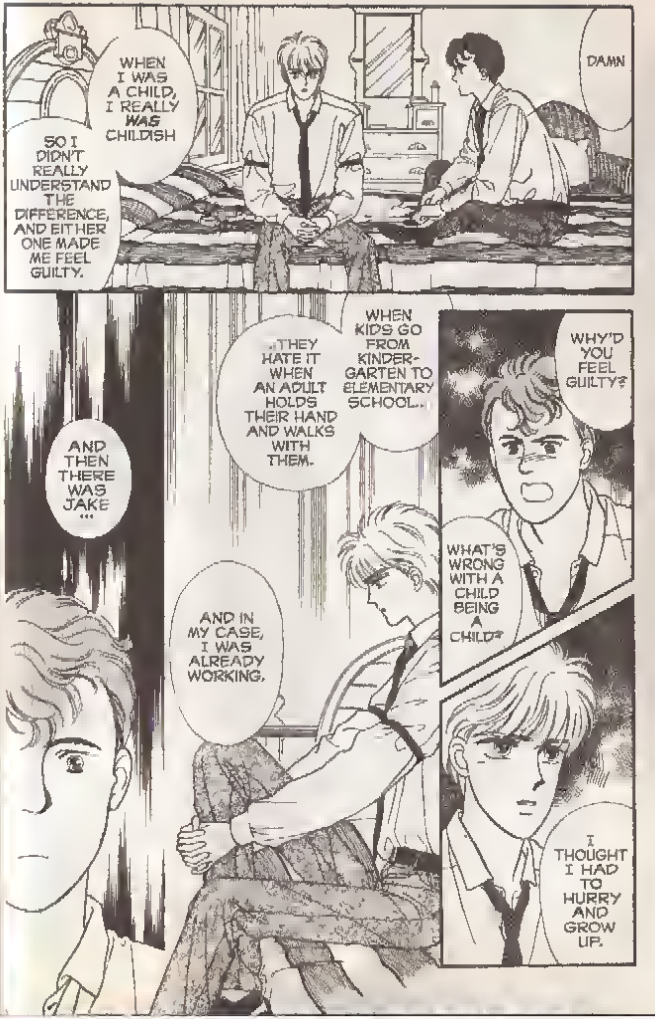
DAMN
WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I REALLY WAS CHILDISH
SO I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE, AND EITHER ONE MADE ME FEEL GUILTY.
WHEN KIDS GO FROM KINDER-GARTEN TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...
"THEY HATE IT WHEN AN ADULT HOLDS THEIR HAND AND WALKS WITH THEM.
AND THEN THERE WAS JAKE ...
WHY'D YOU FEEL GUILTY?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH A CHILD BEING A CHILD?
AND IN MY CASE, I WAS ALREADY WORKING.
I THOUGHT I HAD TO HURRY AND GROW UP.

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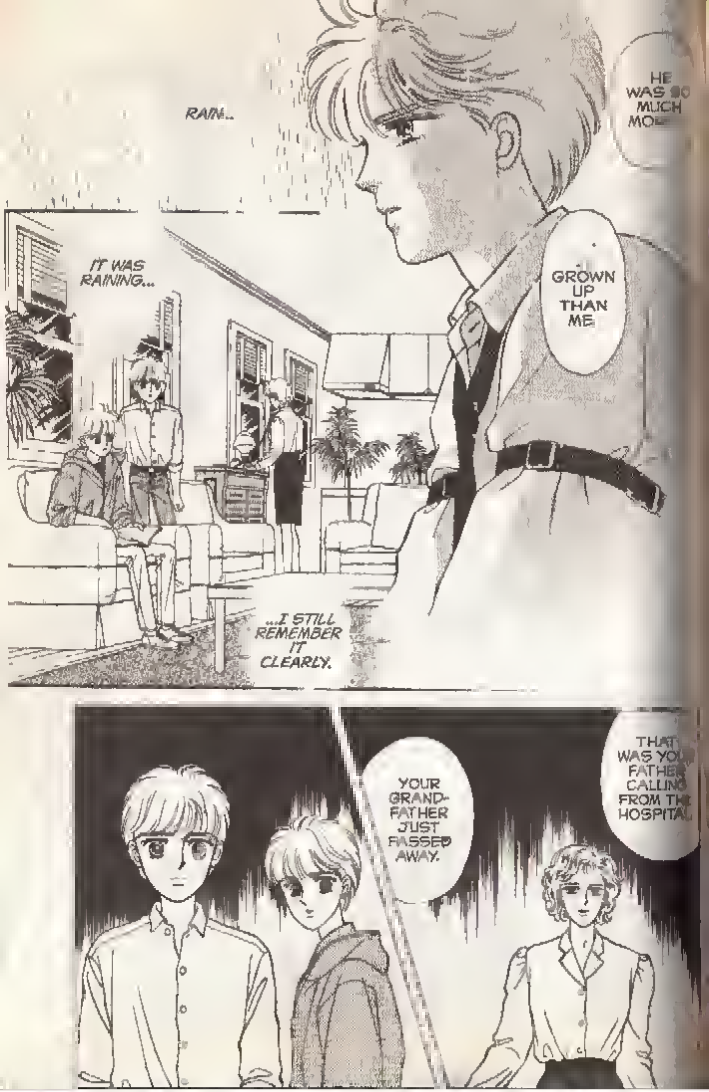
RAIN...
HE WAS SO MUCH MOR
GROWN UP THAN ME.
IT WAS RAINING...
...I STILL REMEMBER IT CLEARLY.
YOUR GRAND-FATHER JUST PASSED AWAY.
THAT WAS YOUR FATHER CALLING FROM THE HOSPITAL

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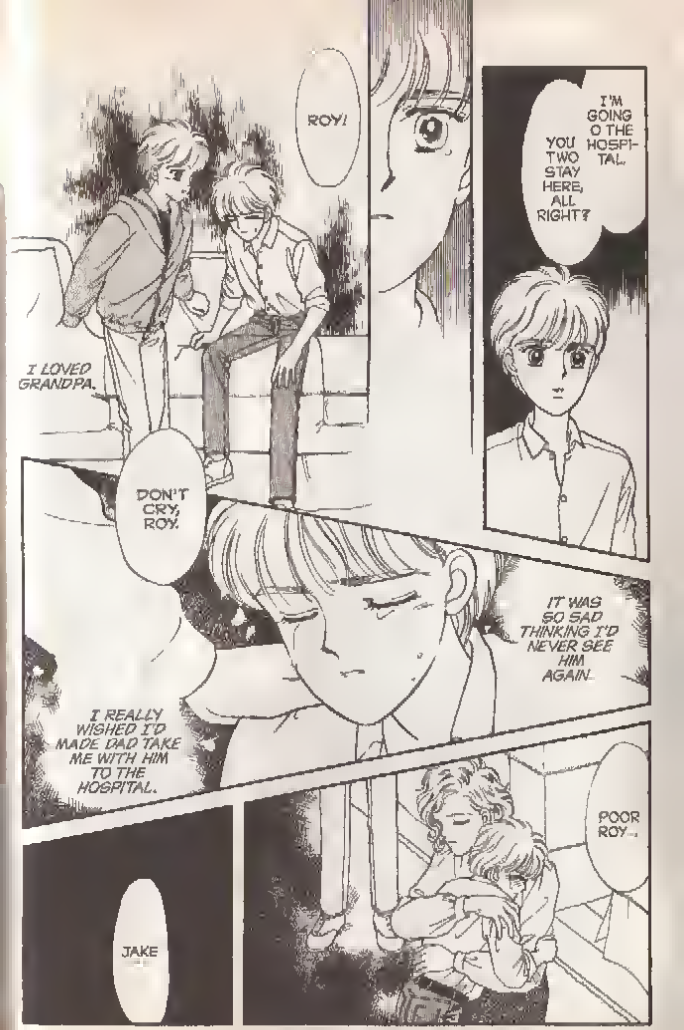
ROY!
I'M GOING O THE HOSPI-TAL. YOU TWO STAY HERE, ALL RIGHT?
I LOVED GRANDPA.
DON'T CRY, ROY.
IT WAS SO SAD THINKING I'D NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN.
I REALLY WISHED I'D MADE DAD TAKE ME WITH HIM TO THE HOSPITAL.
POOR ROY...
JAKE

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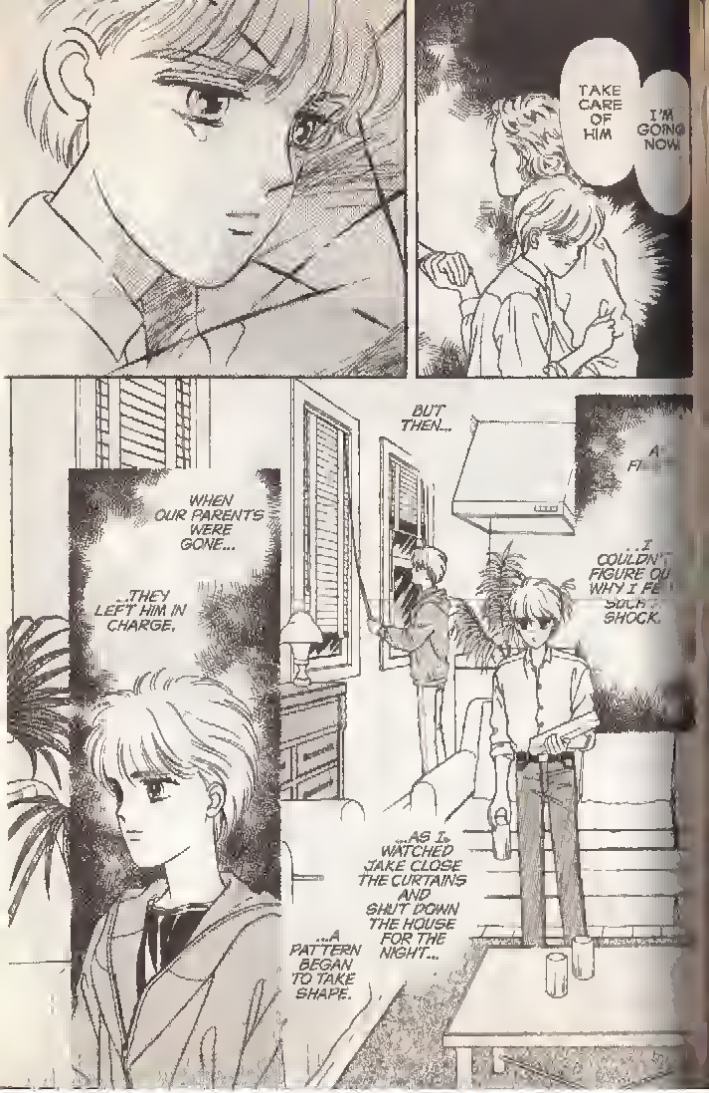
TAKE CARE OF HIM
I'M GOING NOW
BUT THEN...
WHEN OUR PARENTS WERE GONE...
...THEY LEFT HIM IN CHARGE.
...AS I WATCHED JAKE CLOSE THE CURTAINS AND SHUT DOWN THE HOUSE FOR THE NIGHT...
...A PATTERN BEGAN TO TAKE SHAPE.

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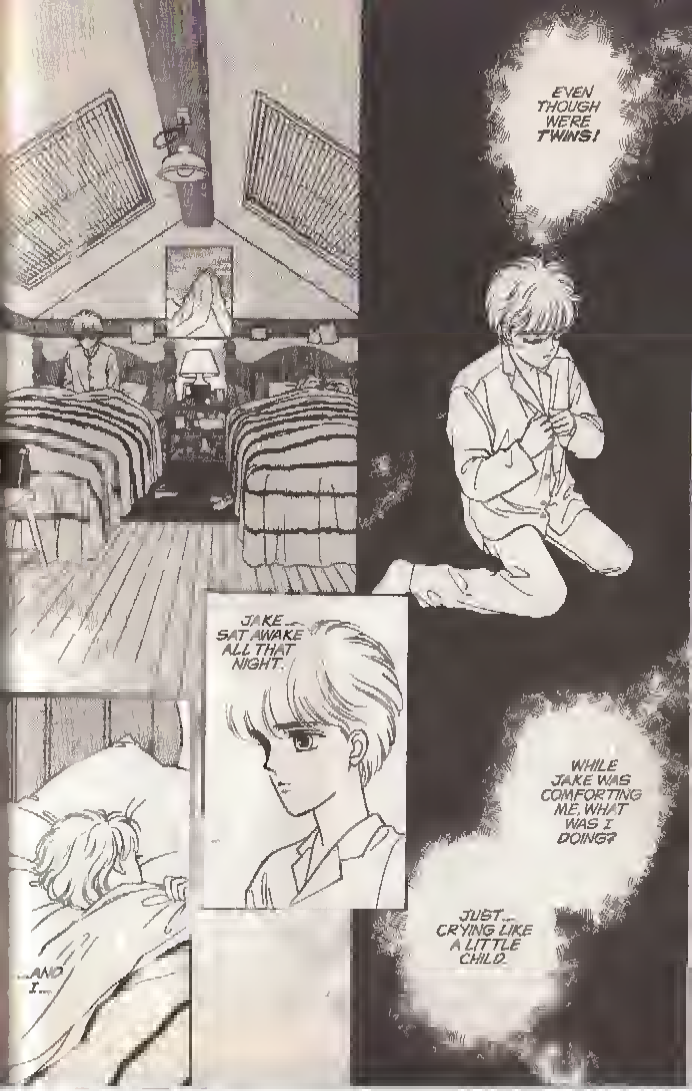
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE TWINS!
JAKE... SAT AWAKE ALL THAT NIGHT.
WHILE JAKE WAS COMFORTING ME, WHAT WAS I DOING?
JUST... CRYING LIKE A LITTLE CHILD.
...AND I...

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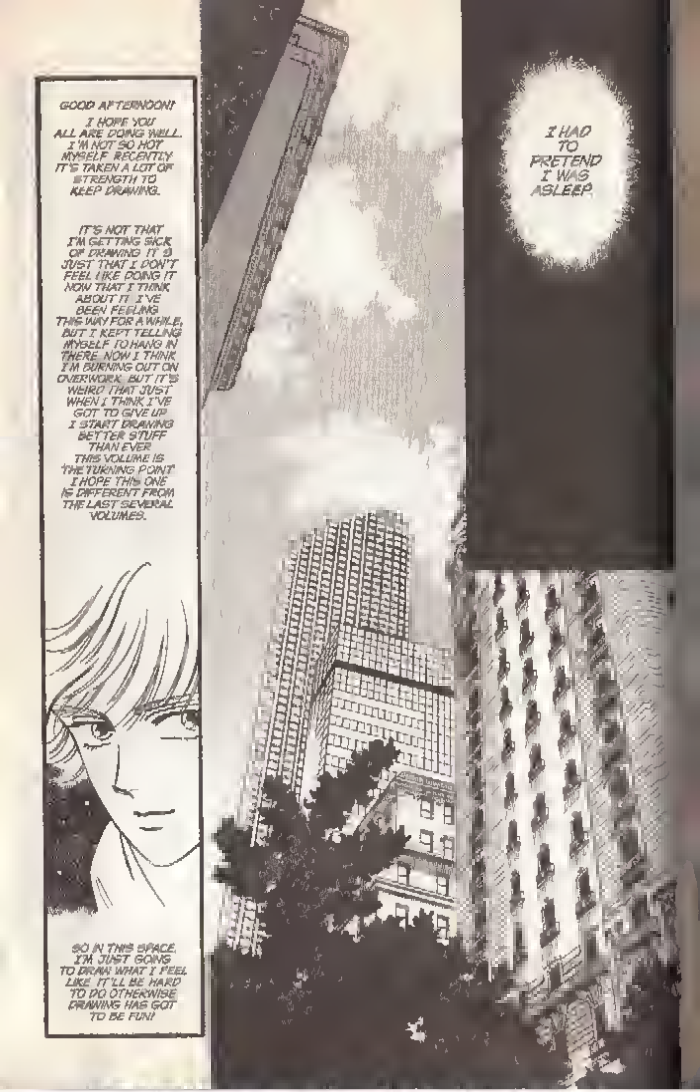
GOOD AFTERNOON!
I HOPE YOU ALL ARE DOING WELL. I'M NOT SO HOT MYSELF. RECENTLY IT'S TAKEN A LOT OF STRENGTH TO KEEP DRAWING.
IT'S NOT THAT I'M GETTING SICK OF DRAWING IT. IT JUST THAT I DON'T FEEL LIKE DOING IT NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT. I'VE BEEN FEELING THIS WAY FOR A WHILE, BUT I KEPT TELLING MYSELF TO HANG IN THERE. NOW I THINK I'M BURNING OUT ON OVERWORK. BUT IT'S WEIRD THAT JUST WHEN I THINK I'VE GOT TO GIVE UP I START DRAWING BETTER STUFF THAN EVER.
THIS VOLUME IS "THE TURNING POINT." I HOPE THIS ONE IS DIFFERENT FROM THE LAST SEVERAL VOLUMES.
SO IN THIS SPACE, I'M JUST GOING TO DRAW WHAT I FEEL LIKE. IT'LL BE HARD TO DO OTHERWISE. DRAWING HAS GOT TO BE FUN!
I HAD TO PRETEND I WAS ASLEEP.

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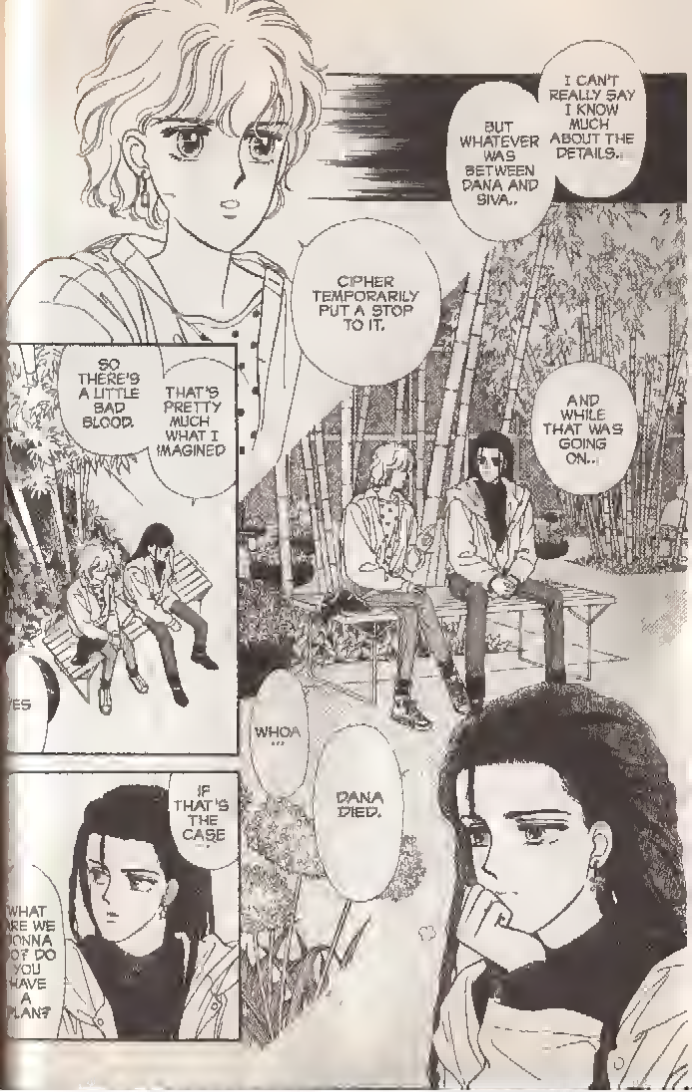
I CAN'T REALLY SAY I KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE DETAILS..
BUT WHATEVER WAS BETWEEN DANA AND SIVA..
CIPHER TEMPORARILY PUT A STOP TO IT.
AND WHILE THAT WAS GOING ON..
SO THERE'S A LITTLE BAD BLOOD.
THAT'S PRETTY MUCH WHAT I IMAGINED
WHOA...
DANA DIED.
IF THAT'S THE CASE...
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO? DO YOU HAVE A PLAN?

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WOW!
SIVA
HE TRACKED DOWN THE ADDRESS OF CIPHER'S AGENT.
BUT I GET THE FEELING...
THAT CIPHER DOESN'T WANT TO CONTACT US.
SO FIRST
...I THINK WE HAVE TO HELP SIVA DEAL WITH HIS FEELINGS.
YOU'RE RIGHT
IN THE END...
...UNTIL SIVA SAYS HE FORGIVES CIPHER, AND UNTIL CIPHER GETS OVER HIS OWN FEELINGS...
...THERE'S NOTHING ANYONE ELSE CAN DO TO CHANGE THINGS

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...I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO DO THAT.
BUT...
YEAH, ME, TOO.
...I DON'T NOTICE ANYTHING ELSE HAPPENING AROUND ME.
WHEN I'M FEELING REALLY BAD ABOUT SOMETHING..
...
IN RETURN...
...ALL I CAN DO IS TO BE PATIENT AND SUPPORT HIM.
I THINK...

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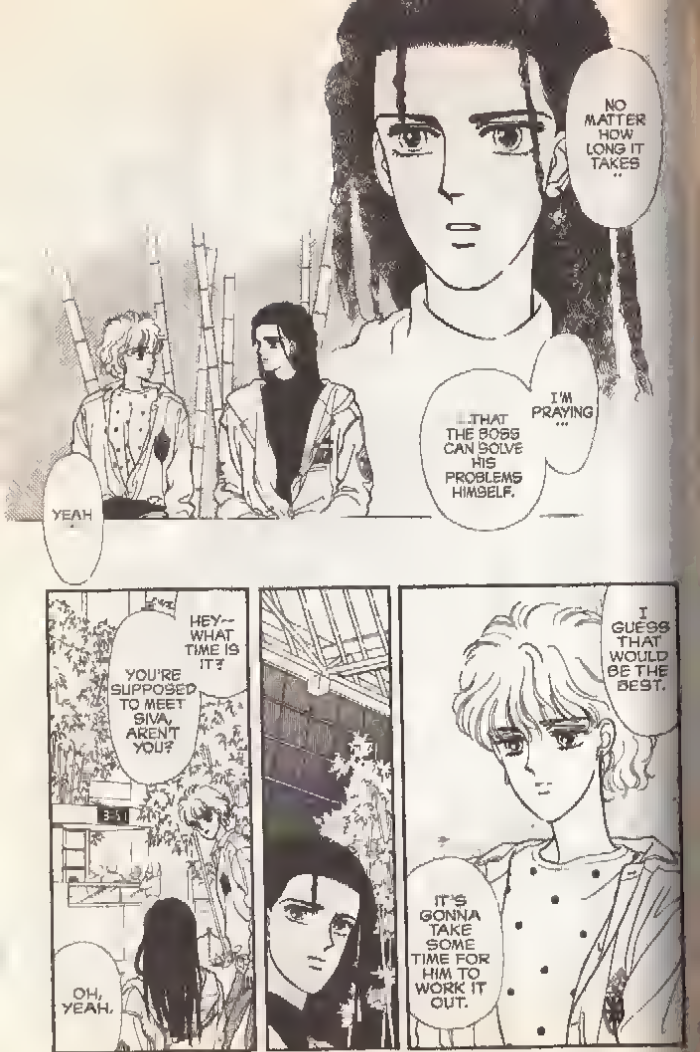
NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES ...
I'M PRAYING ...
...THAT THE BOSS CAN SOLVE HIS PROBLEMS HIMSELF.
YEAH.
HEY-- WHAT TIME IS IT?
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO MEET SIVA, AREN'T YOU?
OH, YEAH.
I GUESS THAT WOULD BE THE BEST.
IT'S GONNA TAKE SOME TIME FOR HIM TO WORK IT OUT.

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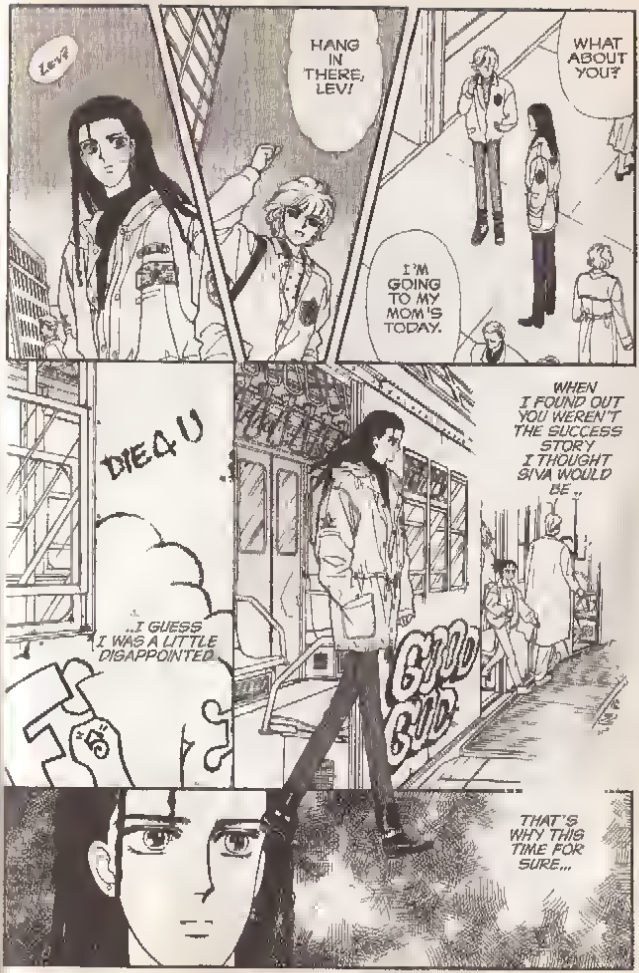
Lev?
HANG IN THERE, LEV!
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I'M GOING TO MY MOM'S TODAY.
WHEN I FOUND OUT YOU WEREN'T THE SUCCESS STORY I THOUGHT SIVA WOULD BE ,,
DIE4U
..I GUESS I WAS A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED
GUD GUD
THAT'S WHY THIS TIME FOR SURE,,,

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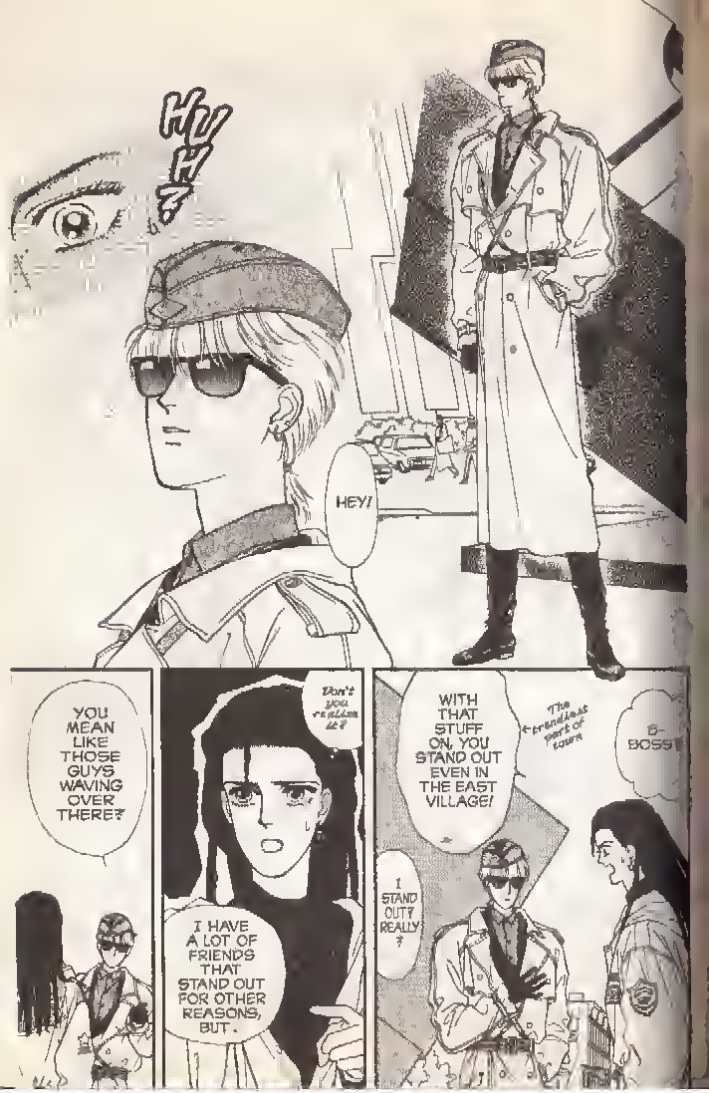
HUH?
HEY!
YOU MEAN LIKE THOSE GUYS WAVING OVER THERE?
Don't you realize it?
I HAVE A LOT OF FRIENDS THAT STAND OUT FOR OTHER REASONS, BUT.
WITH THAT STUFF ON, YOU STAND OUT EVEN IN THE EAST VILLAGE!
The weirdest part of town
B-BOSS!
I STAND OUT? REALLY?

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THE FUNKY BUNCH
OH MAN.
HEY!!
THANKS FOR THE OTHER DAY
THEY'RE THE GUYS WHO FOUND ANISE, AREN'T THEY?
UH, YEAH.
YO, DUDE. I WAS WONDERING WHO THOSE TWO FLASHY GUYS WERE...
AND LO AND BEHOLD, IT'S YOU TWO!
Are we flashy?
HEY...
WELL, I BETTER GO THANK THEM.
BOSS!

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HEY, I'M JUST A GUY, AND I WANT TO THANK THEM.
BUT...
LISTEN! DON'T YOU REALIZE YOU'RE A CELEBRITY?
WELL, WELL.
THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON THIS GUY CALLS "BOSS."
THEY WERE PASSING AROUND OUR PHOTOS BEFORE.
ANYWAY, THEY ALREADY KNOW WHO I AM, DON'T THEY?
!
WE ONLY DID IT BECAUSE LEVINE ASKED US TO.
YOU DON'T GOTTA THANK US.
YOU MUST BE SIVA.

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J.B.?
'CUZ HE'S SO CUTE.
WE TAKE SPECIAL CARE OF THIS GUY.
J.B.!
DON'T DO IT!
I THINK I'LL GIVE IT A TEST.
I WONDER IF YOU'RE REALLY WORTHY OF BEING CALLED "BOSS."

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ALL RIGHT.
WHAT'LL IT TAKE TO SATISFY YOU?
BOSS! NO!
PLEASE DON'T DO THIS! THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN HANDLE THIS GUY!
I KNOW THEY LOOK LIKE BUMS, BUT THESE GUYS ARE ALL KARATE AND JUDO STUDENTS!
HA!
WE'RE GUMS?

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HUH?
I DIDN'T SAY I WAS GONNA FIGHT HIM
OH REALLY?
BOSS?!
I JUST SAID HE CAN DO WHATEVER HE NEEDS TO SATISFY HIMSELF.
I DON'T HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE FIGHTING, AND I DON'T LIKE IT.
I'LL BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF EVERY ONE OF YA!
STOP MESSING AROUND! YOU THINK I'M GONNA LET YOU DO THIS?!
!
WHAP
OUT OF THE WAY, LEVINE.

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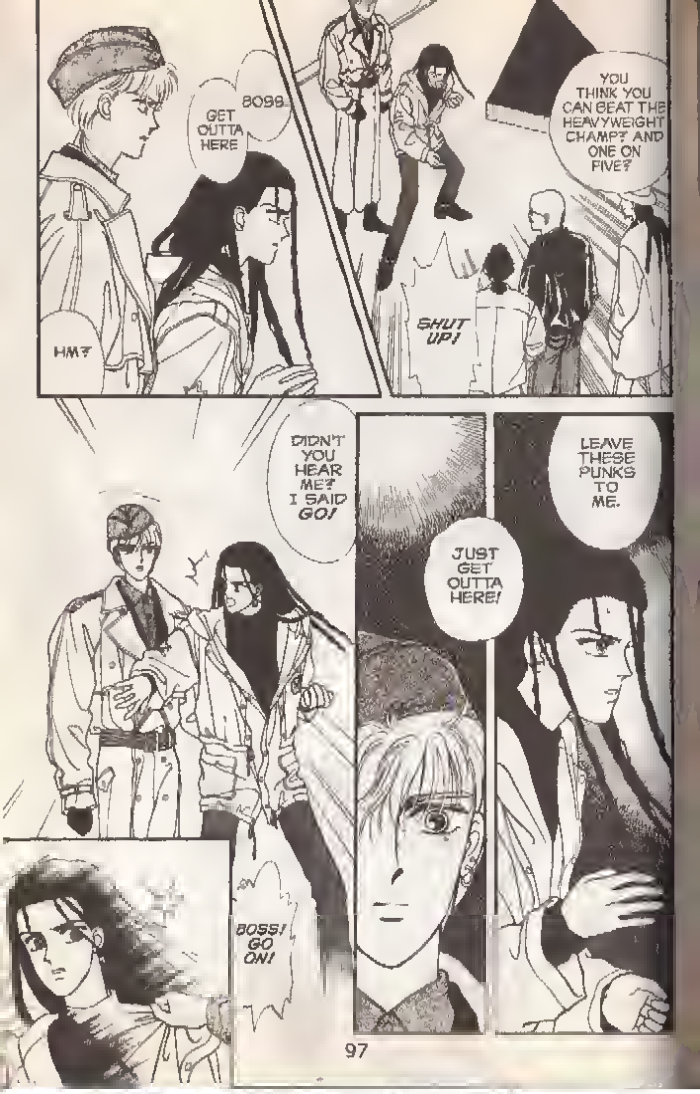
BOSS!
GET OUTTA HERE
HM?
YOU THINK YOU CAN BEAT THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP? AND ONE ON FIVE?
SHUT UP!
DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME? I SAID GO!
LEAVE THESE PUNKS TO ME.
JUST GET OUTTA HERE!
BOSS! GO ON!

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ALL OF A SUDDEN ...
..I FELT SOME KIND OF SHOCK.
AND?
I'M BETTER NOW.
WHAT THE HELL? ARE YOU JERKING ME AROUND?
WEIRD.
..I DEFINITELY FELT SOMETHING.
SORRY.
I BROKE A CUP.
NO, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT.
SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT WAS?

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NO WAY YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING.
EVEN IF YOU ARE TWINS, THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD--
I NEED TO USE YOUR PHONE.
CAN I MAKE A LONG DISTANCE PHONE CALL?
DEEP BEEP
COULD IT BE..?
HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED TO JAKE?
RING RING
AT LEAST LET ME KNOW YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
PLEASE PICK UP THE PHONE. JAKE.

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WELL?
YOUR BROTHER DIDN'T PICK UP?
RING RING
SHOULD I CALL ANISE?
WHAT DO I DO NOW?
THIS IS THE MURPHY'S WE'RE NOT HOME RIGHT NOW.
PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE
SURE
CAN I MAKE ANOTHER CALL?

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HAVE YOU GOT ANY MESSAGES FROM NEW YORK?
HI, SAM. THIS IS ROY. SORRY TO CALL YOU ON THE WEEKEND
SORRY, JUST ONE MORE.
THIS ONE IS LOCAL.
YES. ACTUALLY, I GOT A CALL YESTERDAY
IS IT OKAY IF I LET SOMEONE IN NEW YORK HAVE YOUR ADDRESS?
I WAS ASKED FOR YOUR CONTACT INFO BY A GIRL NAMED ANISE.
SHE SOUNDED WORRIED
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN THERE?
DID SHE SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THINGS IN NEW YORK?
WELL, LET'S SEE...
...NO. SHE DIDN'T REALLY SAY ANY-THING

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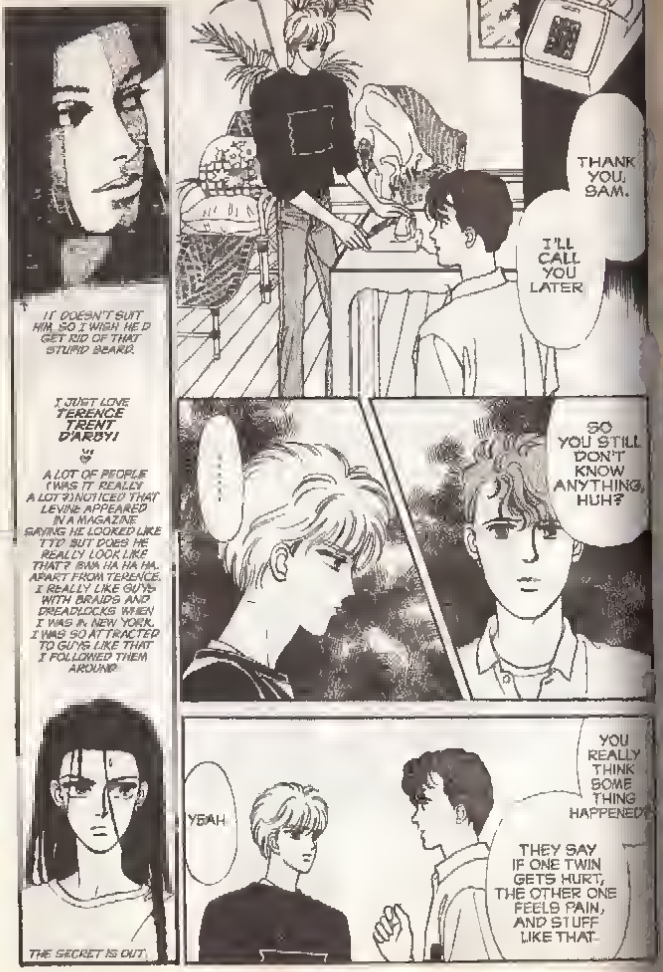
IT DOESN'T SUIT HIM, SO I WISH HE'D GET RID OF THAT STUPID BEARD.
I JUST LOVE TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY!
A LOT OF PEOPLE (WAS IT REALLY A LOT?) NOTICED THAT LEVINE APPEARED IN A MAGAZINE SAYING HE LOOKED LIKE T.T.D. BUT DOES HE REALLY LOOK LIKE THAT? BWA HA HA HA. APART FROM TERENCE, I REALLY LIKE GUYS WITH BRAIDS AND DREADLOCKS WHEN I WAS IN NEW YORK, I WAS SO ATTRACTED TO GUYS LIKE THAT I FOLLOWED THEM AROUND.
THE SECRET IS OUT.
THANK YOU, SAM.
I'LL CALL YOU LATER
SO YOU STILL DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, HUH?
YEAH
YOU REALLY THINK SOME THING HAPPENED?
THEY SAY IF ONE TWIN GETS HURT, THE OTHER ONE FEELS PAIN, AND STUFF LIKE THAT.

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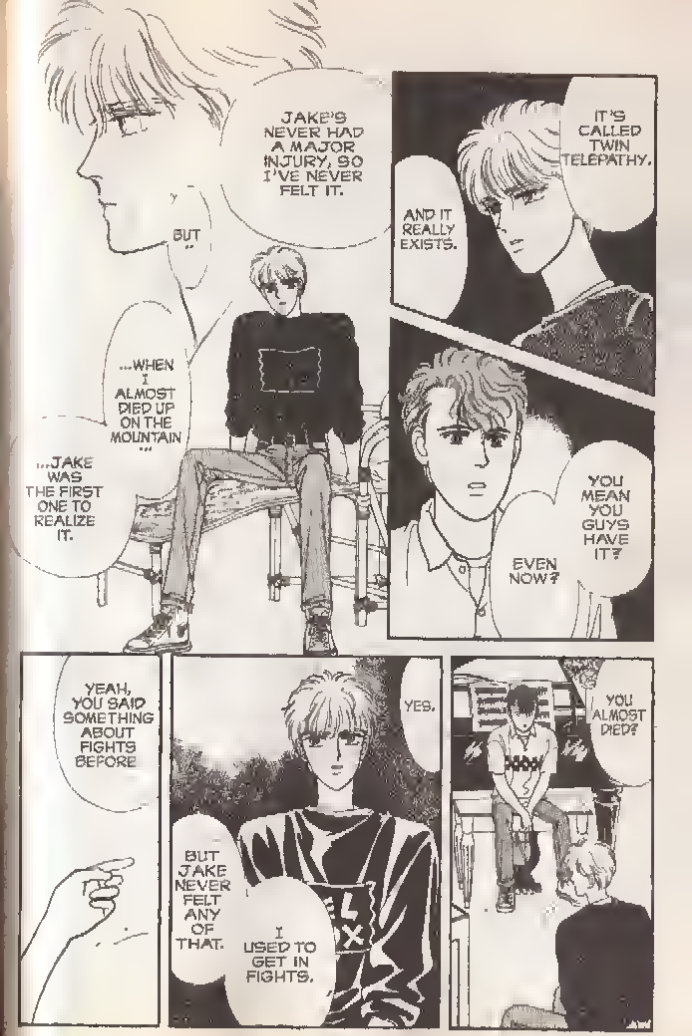
JAKE'S NEVER HAD A MAJOR INJURY, SO I'VE NEVER FELT IT.
BUT...
...WHEN I ALMOST DIED UP ON THE MOUNTAIN...
...JAKE WAS THE FIRST ONE TO REALIZE IT.
IT'S CALLED TWIN TELEPATHY.
AND IT REALLY EXISTS.
YOU MEAN YOU GUYS HAVE IT?
EVEN NOW?
YEAH, YOU SAID SOMETHING ABOUT FIGHTS BEFORE
YES.
BUT JAKE NEVER FELT ANY OF THAT.
I USED TO GET IN FIGHTS.
YOU ALMOST DIED?

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WELL...
...I WAS WHEN I FIRST STARTED GETTING MY FACE ON TV.
WHAT FOR?!
...SOMETIMES I GOT PICKED ON.
UH, BECAUSE
SO HOW COULD YOU HAVE ALMOST NO EXPERIENCE PLAYING, AND YET HAVE SO MUCH EXPERIENCE FIGHTING?
SO YOU HAD TO FIGHT BACK.
THAT MAKES SENSE
I COULD UNDERSTAND IF YOU'D DONE SOMETHING WRONG, BUT THAT'S JUST SO UNFAIR!
MAN!
THAT KIND OF STUFF REALLY PISSES ME OFF!
YEAH. ALL DADS SAY THE SAME THING.
MY DAD SAID IF I LIKED ACTING, I SHOULDN'T BACK DOWN.

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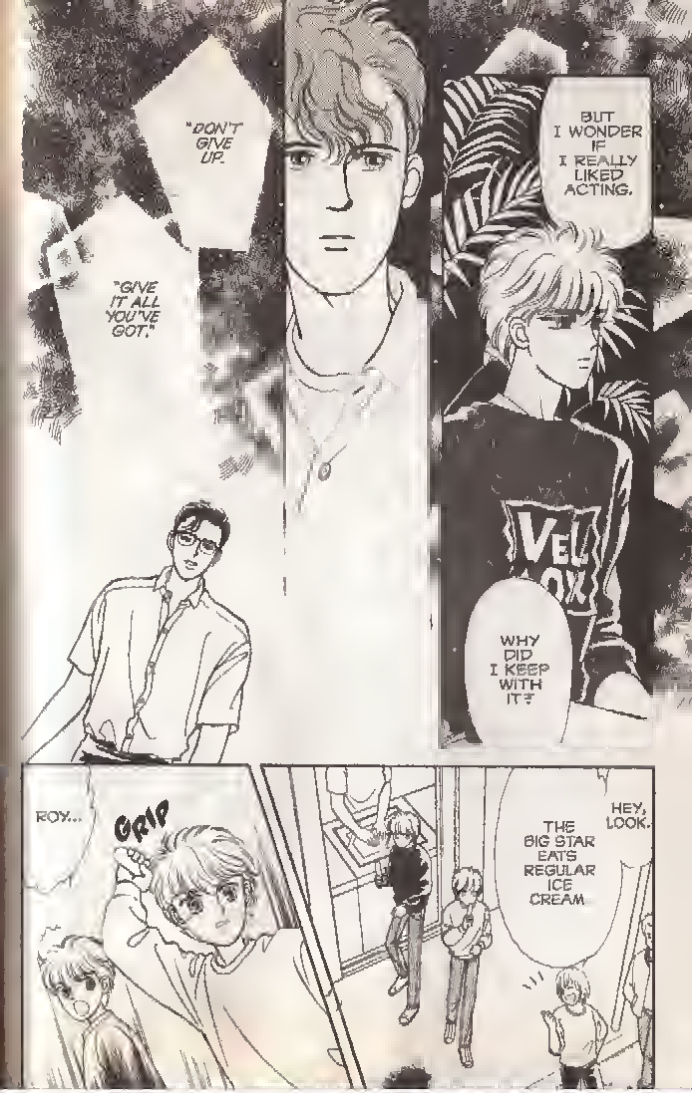
"DON'T GIVE UP.
"GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT."
BUT I WONDER IF I REALLY LIKED ACTING.
WHY DID I KEEP WITH IT?
ROY...
GRIP
HEY, LOOK.
THE BIG STAR EATS REGULAR ICE CREAM.

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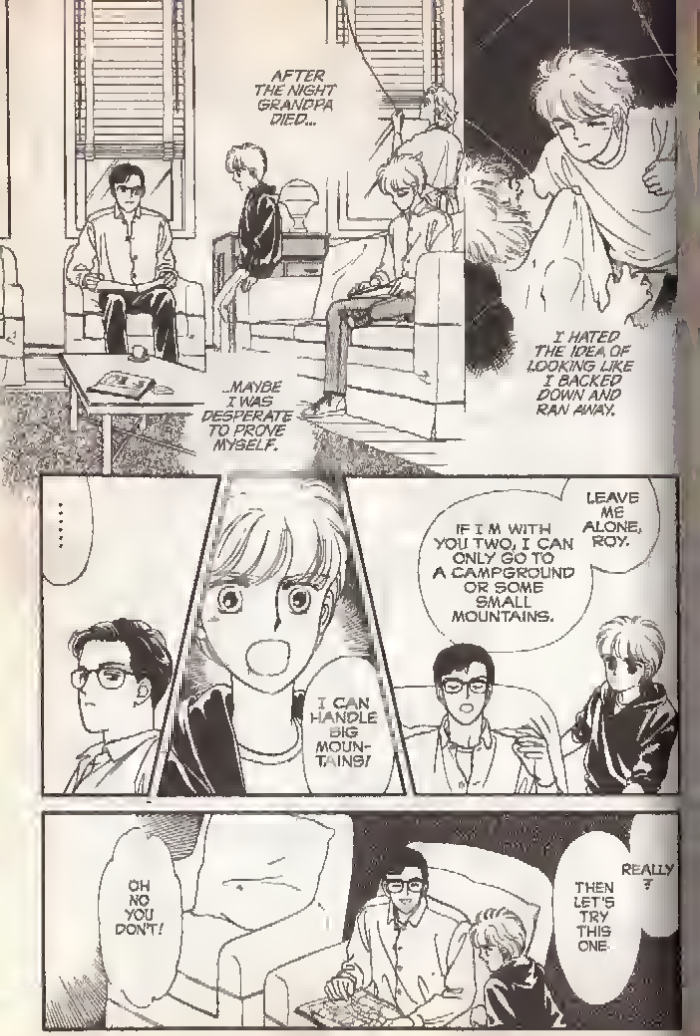
AFTER THE NIGHT GRANDPA DIED...
I HATED THE IDEA OF LOOKING LIKE I BACKED DOWN AND RAN AWAY.
...MAYBE I WAS DESPERATE TO PROVE MYSELF.
.....
I CAN HANDLE BIG MOUN-TAINS!
IF I'M WITH YOU TWO, I CAN ONLY GO TO A CAMPGROUND OR SOME SMALL MOUNTAINS.
LEAVE ME ALONE, ROY.
OH NO YOU DON'T!
THEN LET'S TRY THIS ONE.
REALLY ?

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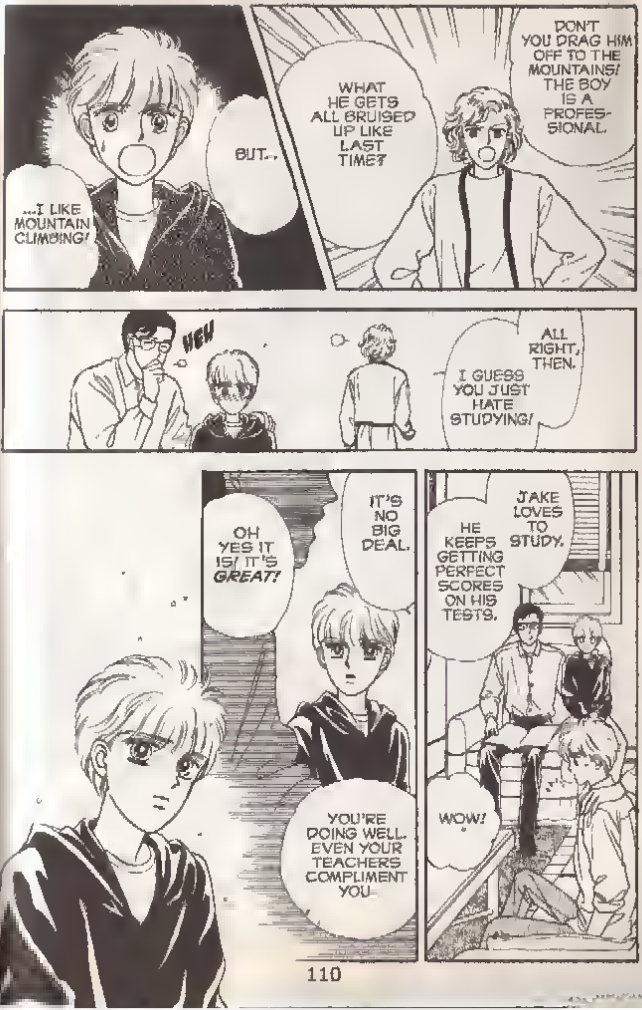
...I LIKE MOUNTAIN CLIMBING!
BUT...
WHAT HE GETS ALL BRUISED UP LIKE LAST TIME?
DON'T YOU DRAG HIM OFF TO THE MOUNTAINS! THE BOY IS A PROFESSIONAL.
HEH
I GUESS YOU JUST HATE STUDYING!
ALL RIGHT, THEN.
OH YES IT IS! IT'S GREAT!
IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
YOU'RE DOING WELL. EVEN YOUR TEACHERS COMPLIMENT YOU.
HE KEEPS GETTING PERFECT SCORES ON HIS TESTS.
JAKE LOVES TO STUDY.
WOW!

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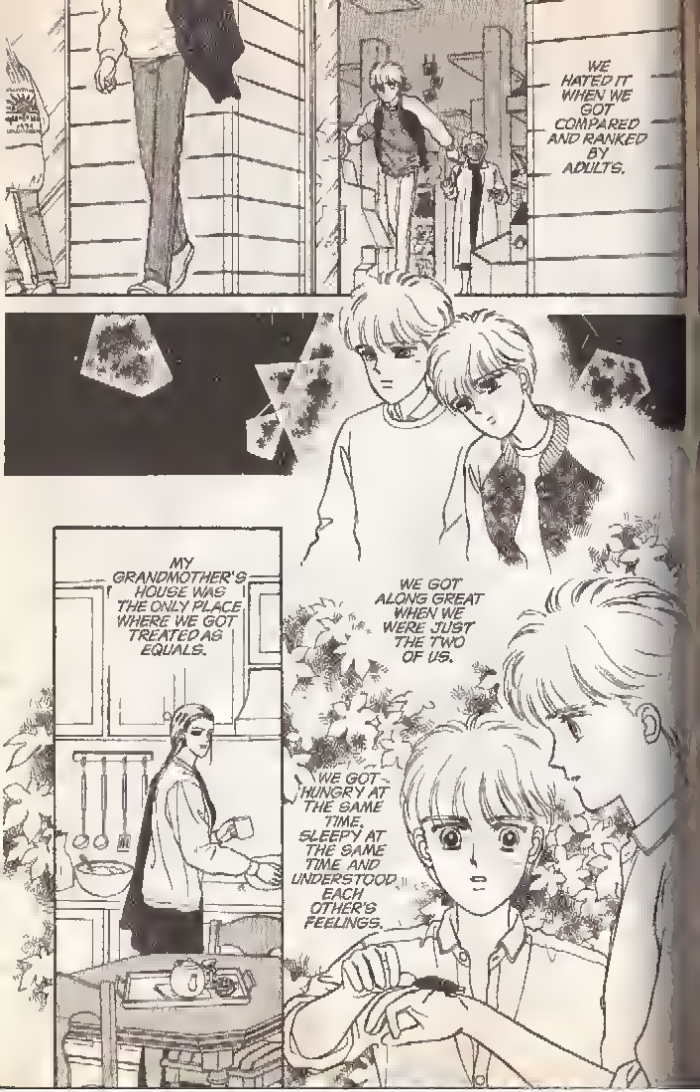
WE HATED IT WHEN WE GOT COMPARED AND RANKED BY ADULTS.
MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE WAS THE ONLY PLACE WHERE WE GOT TREATED AS EQUALS.
WE GOT ALONG GREAT WHEN WE WERE JUST THE TWO OF US.
WE GOT HUNGRY AT THE SAME TIME, SLEEPY AT THE SAME TIME, AND UNDERSTOOD EACH OTHER'S FEELINGS.

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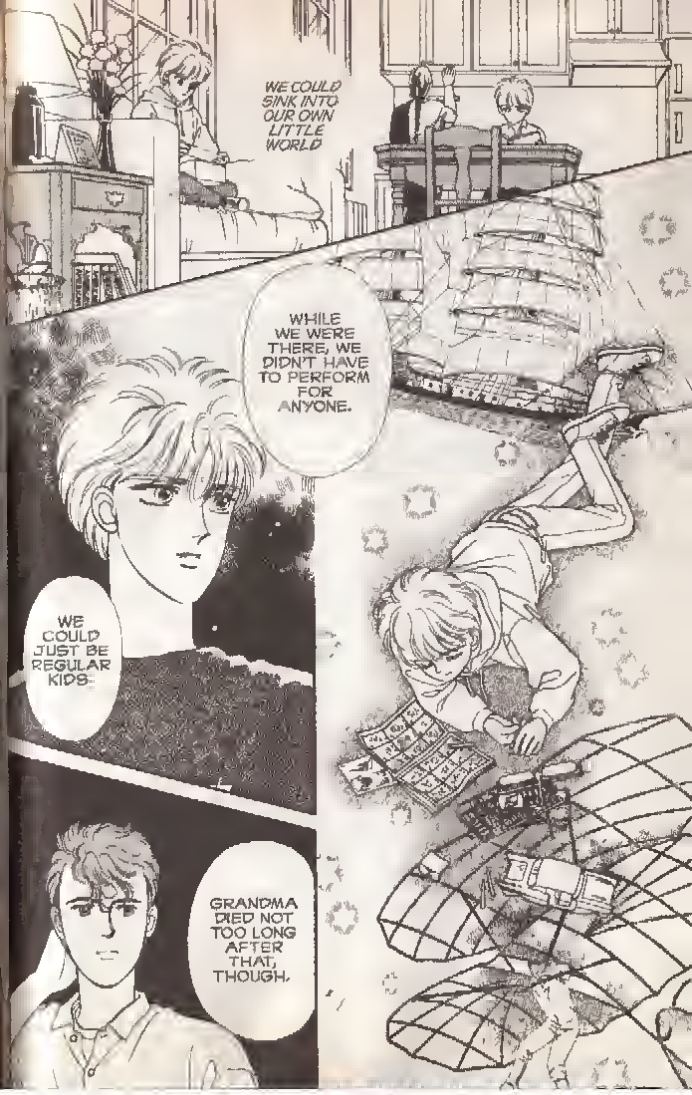
WE COULD SINK INTO OUR OWN LITTLE WORLD
WHILE WE WERE THERE, WE DIDN'T HAVE TO PERFORM FOR ANYONE.
WE COULD JUST BE REGULAR KIDS.
GRANDMA DIED NOT TOO LONG AFTER THAT, THOUGH.

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HEY!
TWINS
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE OF THEM DIES?
WHAT?
DON'T BE SAYING CRAZY STUFF LIKE THAT!
IF YOU THINK LIKE THAT ...
...THEN THE FACT THAT YOU'RE SITTING HERE JUST FINE MEANS YOUR BROTHER MUST BE OKAY, TOO.
HMM...
YOU CAN TRY CALLING AGAIN LATER.
YEAH
MAYBE SO.
GOOD.. THANKS

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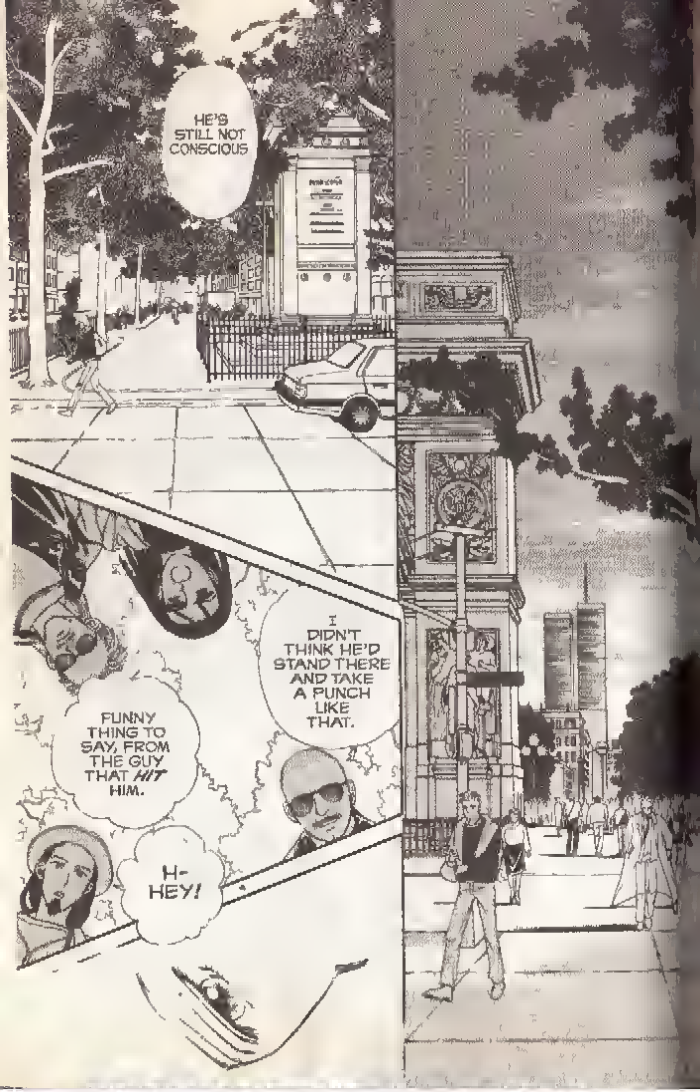
HE'S STILL NOT CONSCIOUS
I DIDN'T THINK HE'D STAND THERE AND TAKE A PUNCH LIKE THAT.
FUNNY THING TO SAY, FROM THE GUY THAT *HIT* HIM.
H-HEY!

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BOSS!
HE'S AWAKE!
ARE YOU OKAY, BOSS?
EH?
HUH? WAS ALL THAT A DREAM?
YOU REALLY RANG HIS BELL.
YOU HIT HIM TOO HARD, MAN
HEY... PEOPLE USUALLY TRY TO BLOCK OR SOMETHING.
WHAT A STRANGE DREAM ...
DAMN... I CAN'T REMEMBER ANY OF IT.
MY CONSCIOUSNESS WAS INSIDE ROY
I COULD SEE THROUGH HIS EYES.

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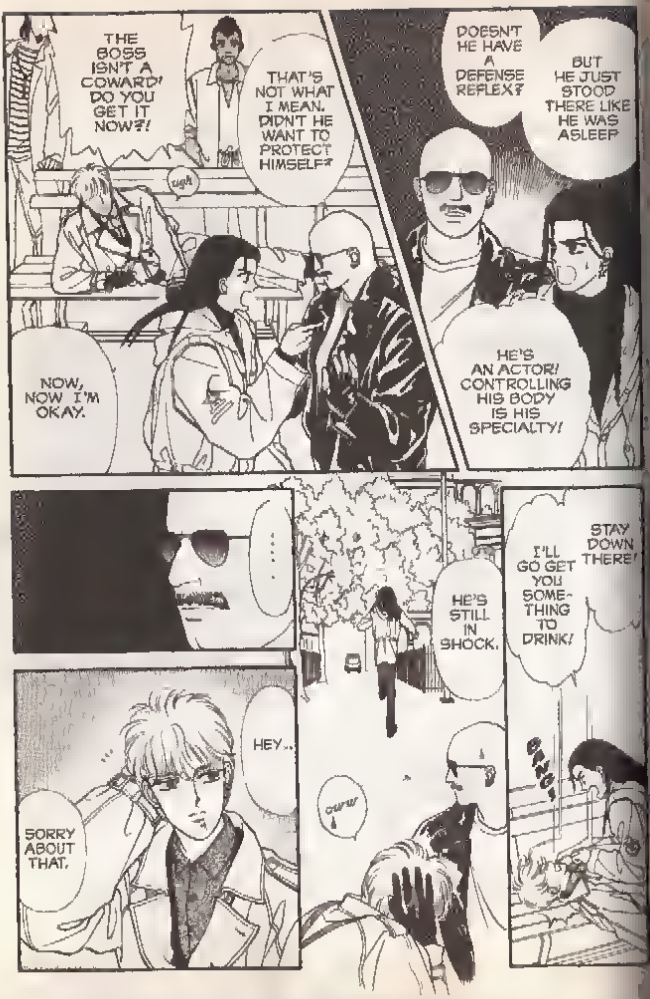
THE BOSS ISN'T A COWARD! DO YOU GET IT NOW?!
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN. DIDN'T HE WANT TO PROTECT HIMSELF?
ugh
NOW, NOW I'M OKAY.
DOESN'T HE HAVE A DEFENSE REFLEX?
BUT HE JUST STOOD THERE LIKE HE WAS ASLEEP
HE'S AN ACTOR! CONTROLLING HIS BODY IS HIS SPECIALTY!
.....
HE'S STILL IN SHOCK.
I'LL GO GET YOU SOME-THING TO DRINK!
STAY DOWN THERE!
CLANG
HEY..
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
GURU

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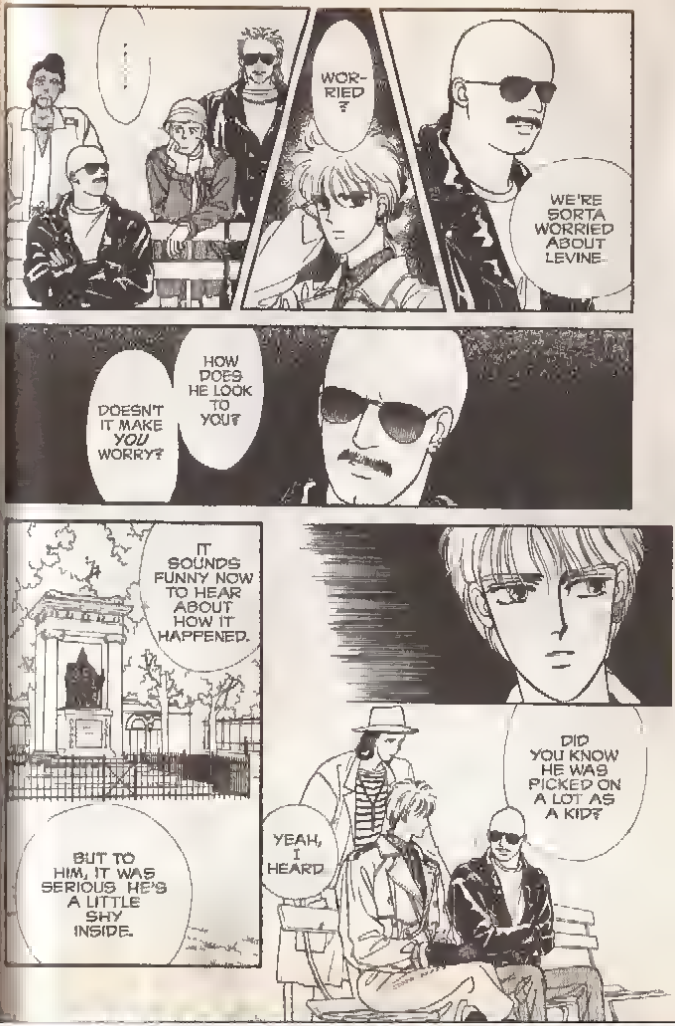
WOR-RIED?
WE'RE SORTA WORRIED ABOUT LEVINE.
HOW DOES HE LOOK TO YOU?
DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU WORRY?
IT SOUNDS FUNNY NOW TO HEAR ABOUT HOW IT HAPPENED.
BUT TO HIM, IT WAS SERIOUS. HE'S A LITTLE SHY INSIDE.
DID YOU KNOW HE WAS PICKED ON A LOT AS A KID?
YEAH, I HEARD.

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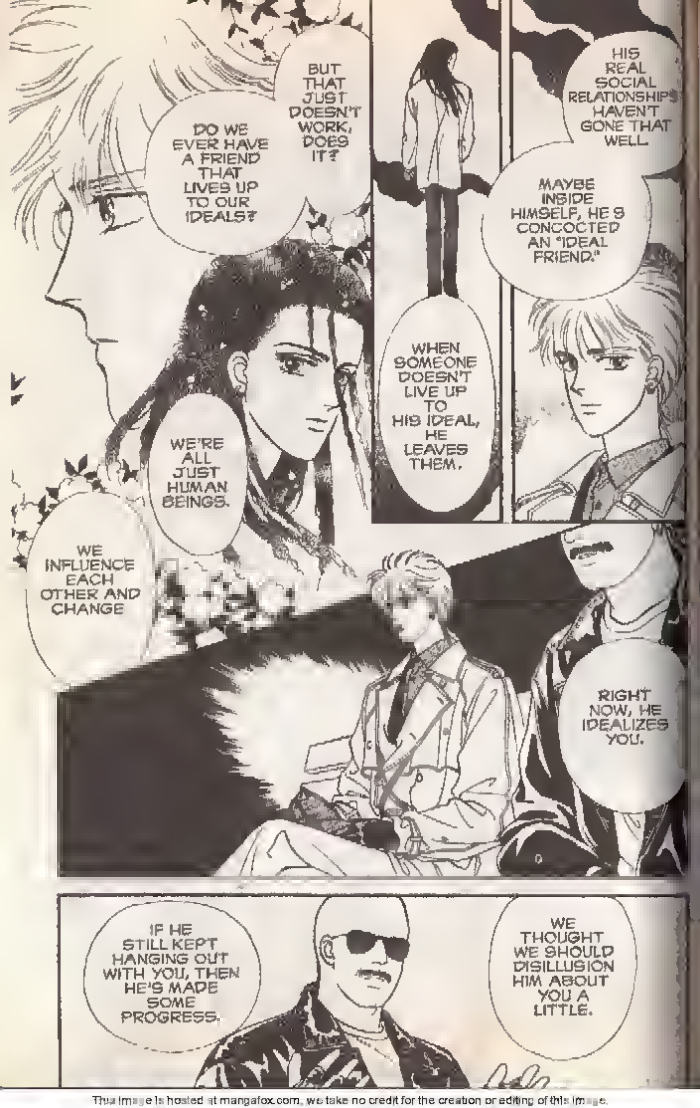
DO WE EVER HAVE A FRIEND THAT LIVES UP TO OUR IDEALS?
BUT THAT JUST DOESN'T WORK, DOES IT?
WE'RE ALL JUST HUMAN BEINGS.
WE INFLUENCE EACH OTHER AND CHANGE
WHEN SOMEONE DOESN'T LIVE UP TO HIS IDEAL, HE LEAVES THEM.
MAYBE INSIDE HIMSELF, HE'S CONCOCTED AN "IDEAL FRIEND."
HIS REAL SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS HAVEN'T GONE THAT WELL.
RIGHT NOW, HE IDEALIZES YOU.
IF HE STILL KEPT HANGING OUT WITH YOU, THEN HE'S MADE SOME PROGRESS.
WE THOUGHT WE SHOULD DISILLUSION HIM ABOUT YOU A LITTLE.

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.....
THAT WAS UNEX-PECTED.
BUT FOR YOU TO SHOW THAT KINDA STUPID COURAGE ..
UH... SORT OF...
REALLY ARE WORRIED ABOUT LEVINE.
YOU GUYS ...
HA HA HA
ON THE OTHER HAND, HE'S PROBABLY TOTALLY SICK OF US.
WE JUST LOVE HAVING HIM AROUND.
HIS REACTIONS ARE SO HONEST.
THAT GUY STILL HAS A PURE, INNOCENT SOUL.
Yeah!

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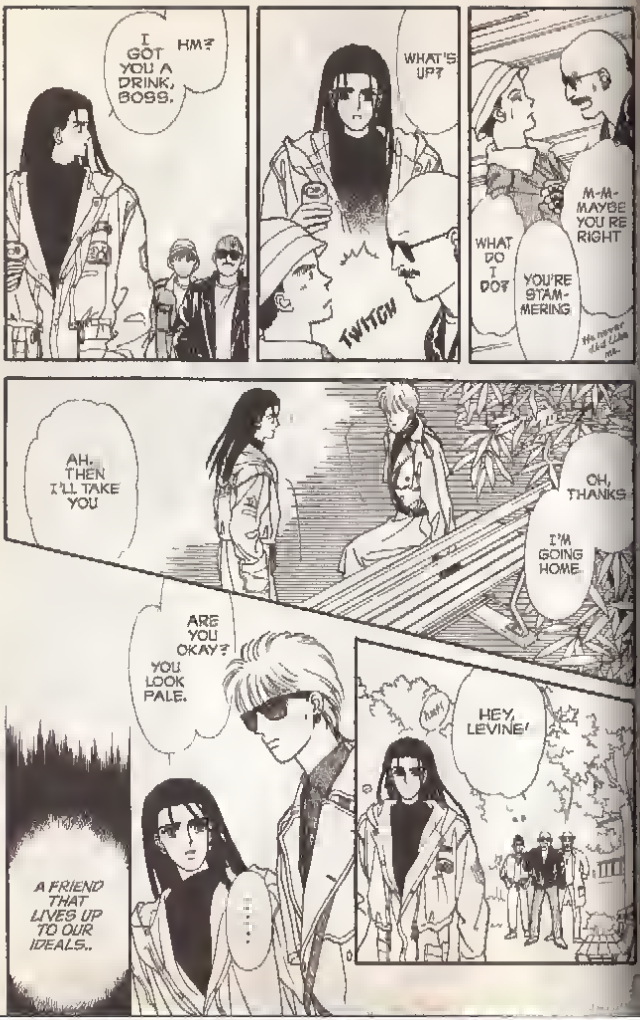

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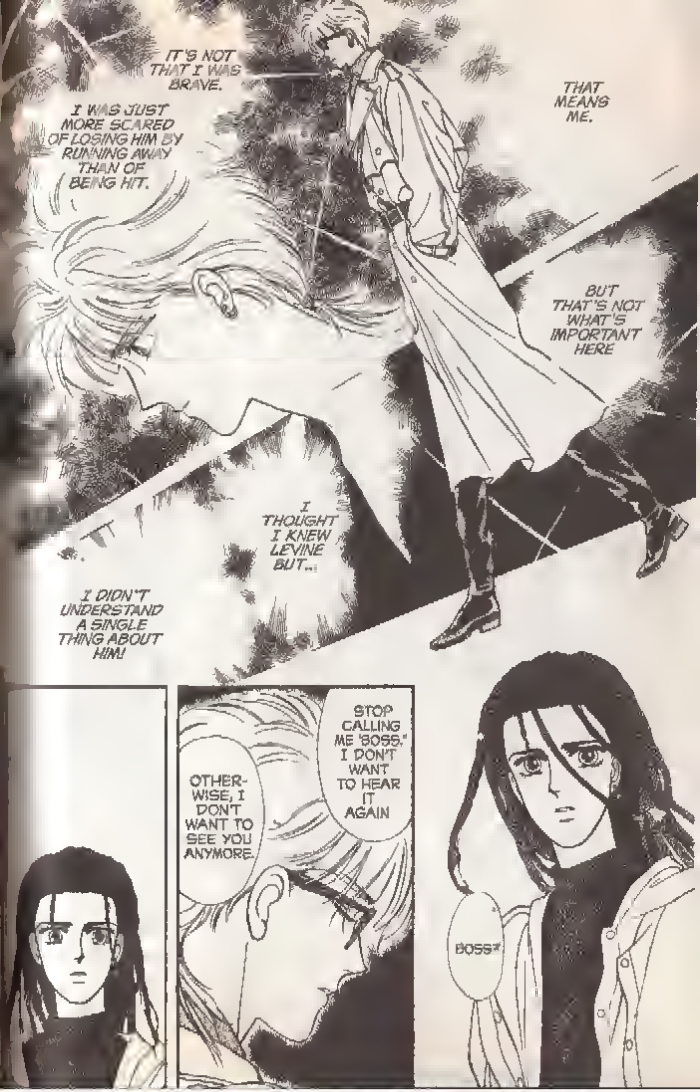
IT'S NOT THAT I WAS BRAVE.
I WAS JUST MORE SCARED OF LOSING HIM BY RUNNING AWAY THAN OF BEING HIT.
THAT MEANS ME.
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT'S IMPORTANT HERE
I THOUGHT I KNEW LEVINE BUT...
I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND A SINGLE THING ABOUT HIM!
OTHER-WISE, I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU ANYMORE.
STOP CALLING ME 'BOSS.' I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT AGAIN
BOSS?

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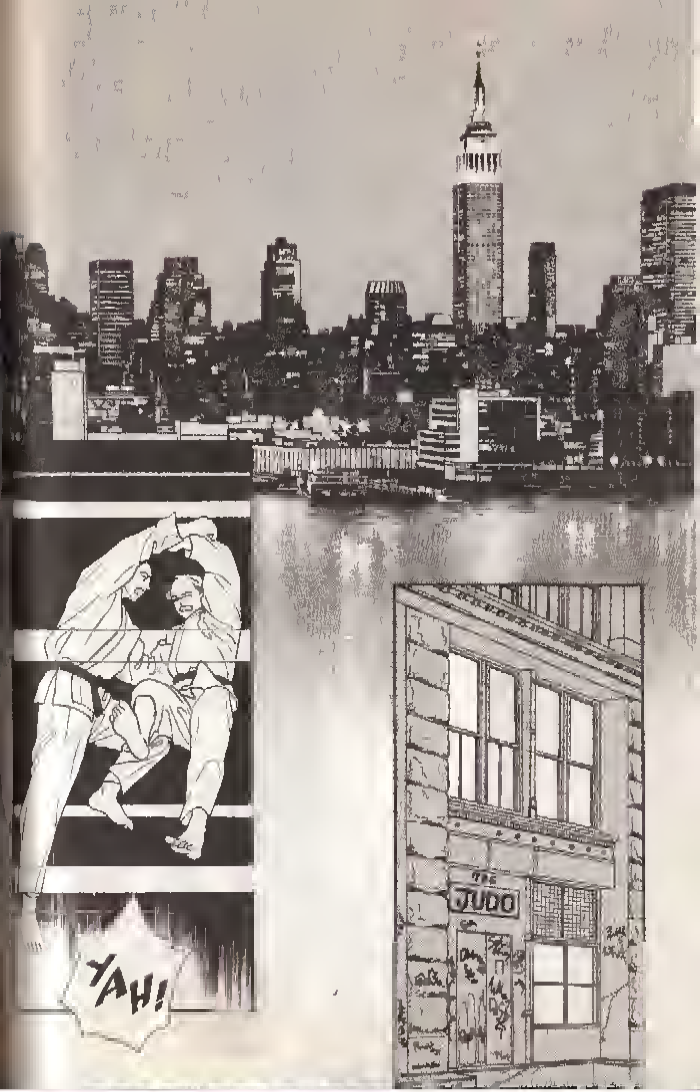

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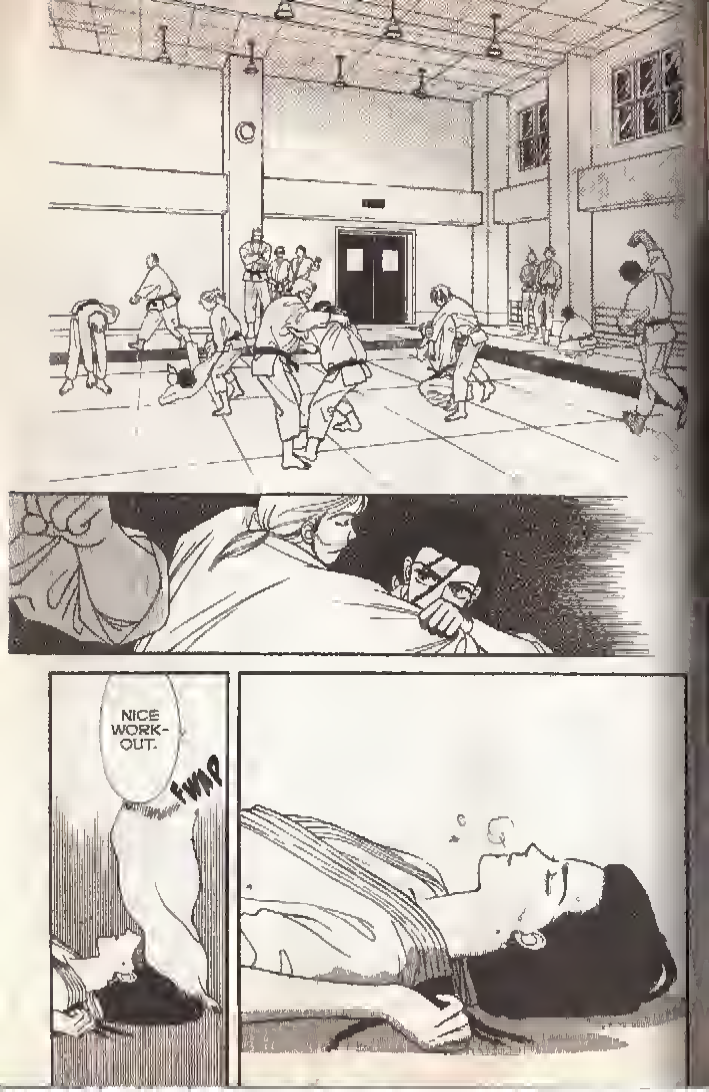

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LARRY.
YOU SEEM RESTLESS LATELY.
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN BETWEEN YOU AND J.B.'S BOYS?
WORRIED?
WHY WORRY ABOUT ME? I...
DID YOU KNOW THAT?
THEY'RE PRETTY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
HEY, HEY NO MAN IS AN ISLAND.
.....

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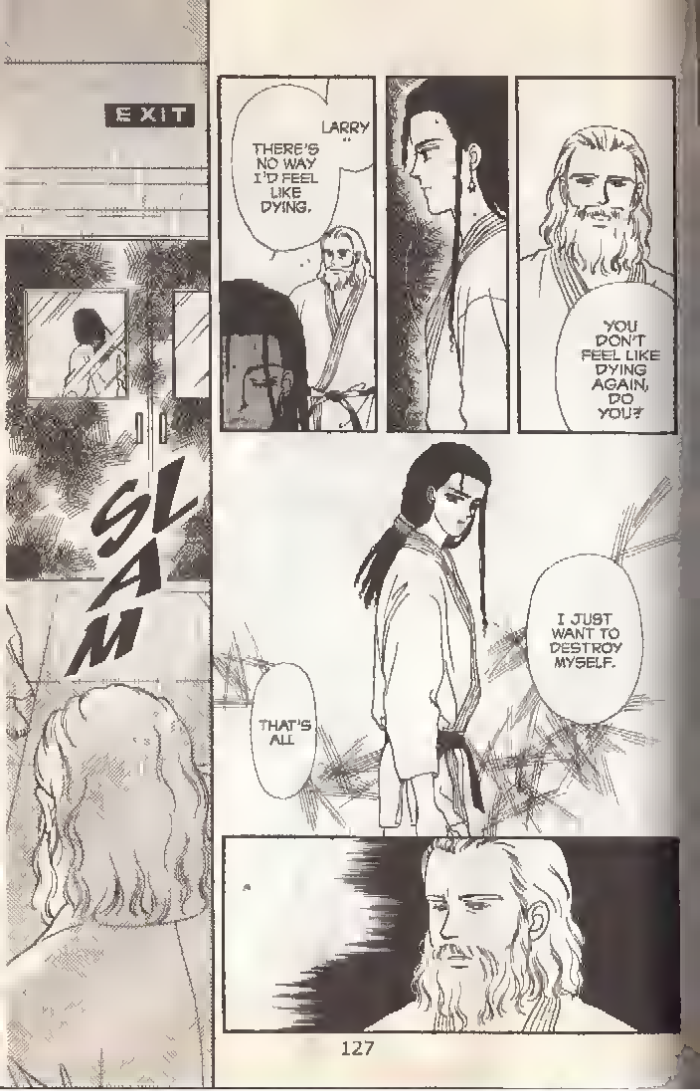

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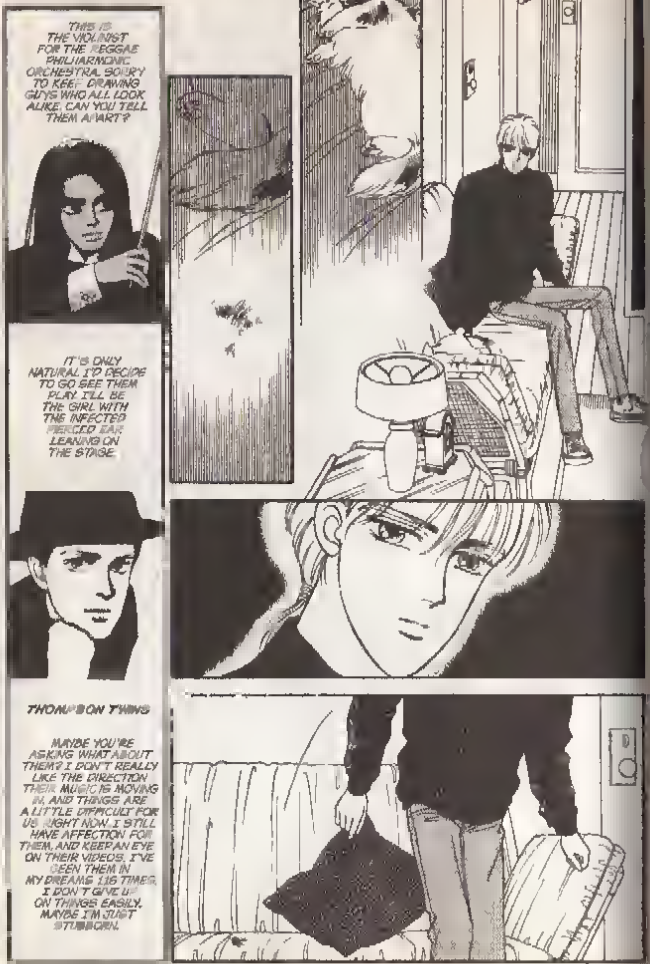
THIS IS THE VIOLINIST FOR THE LEGGATE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA. SORRY TO KEEP DRAWING GUYS WHO ALL LOOK ALIKE. CAN YOU TELL THEM APART?
IT'S ONLY NATURAL I'D DECIDE TO GO SEE THEM PLAY. I'LL BE THE GIRL WITH THE INFECTED PIERCED EAR LEANING ON THE STAGE.
THOUGHTS ON THINGS
MAYBE YOU'RE ASKING WHAT ABOUT THEM? I DON'T REALLY LIKE THE DIRECTION THEIR MUSIC IS MOVING IN, AND THINGS ARE A LITTLE DIFFICULT FOR US RIGHT NOW. I STILL HAVE AFFECTION FOR THEM, AND KEEP AN EYE ON THEIR VIDEOS. I'VE BEEN THEM IN MY DREAMS LIKE TIMES. I DON'T GIVE UP ON THINGS EASILY. MAYBE I'M JUST STUBBORN.

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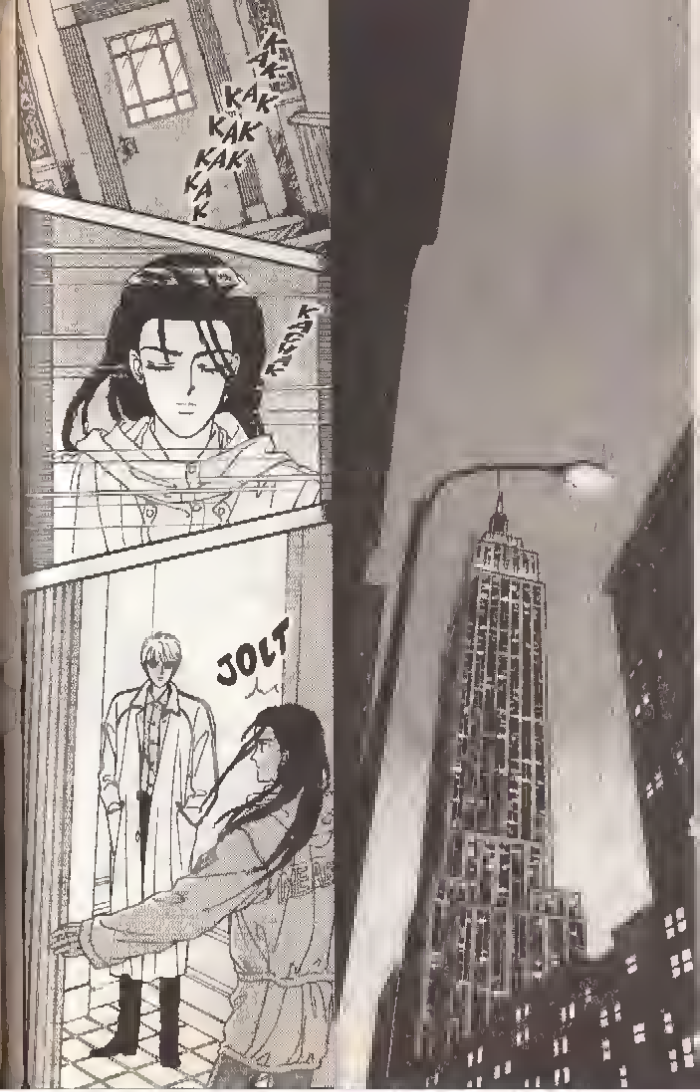

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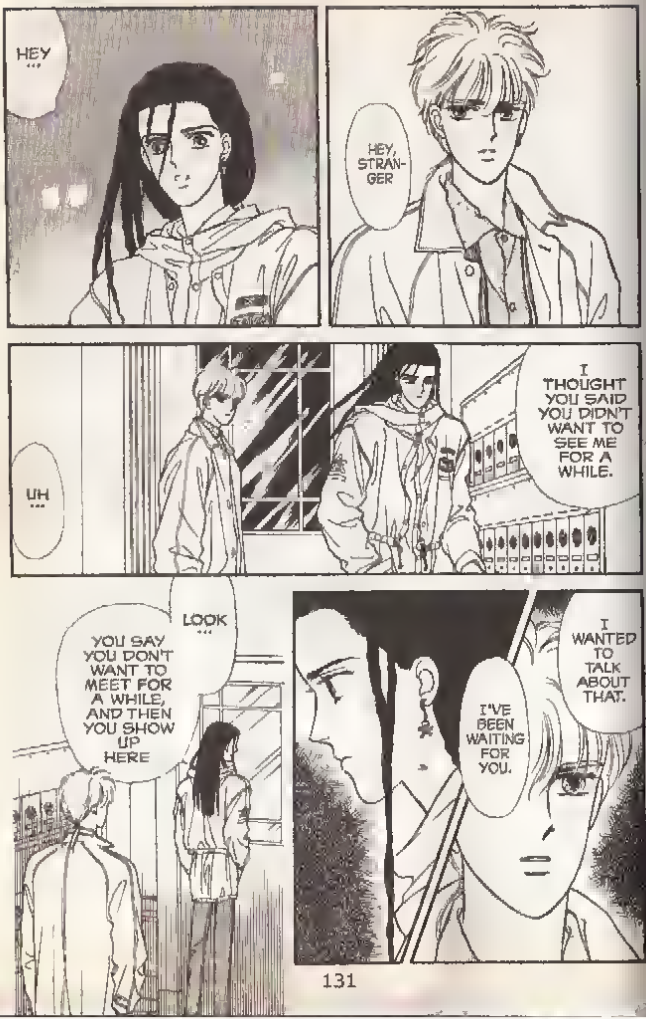
HEY ...
HEY, STRANGER
UH ...
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T WANT TO SEE ME FOR A WHILE.
LOOK ...
YOU SAY YOU DON'T WANT TO MEET FOR A WHILE, AND THEN YOU SHOW UP HERE
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT THAT.

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YOU DON'T EVEN THINK OF OTHER PEOPLE'S FEELINGS.
IT'S SELFISH.
WHAT AM I SAY-ING?
I'M JUST VENTING SORRY
OH, MAN..
I DIDN'T MEAN TO KNOCK YOU DOWN, TOO.
KNOCK ME DOWN?

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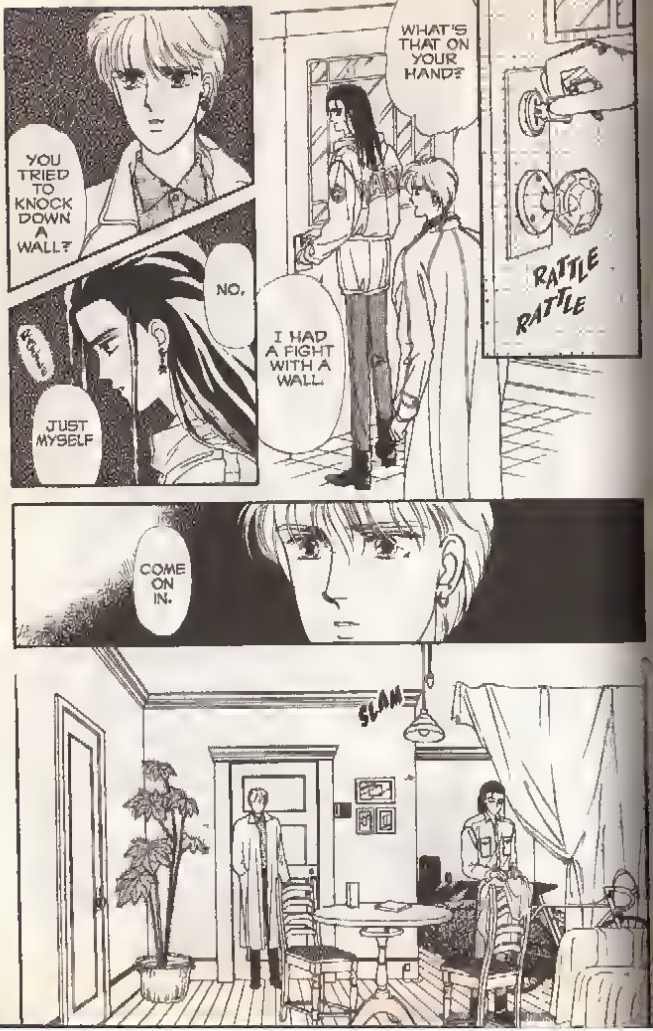

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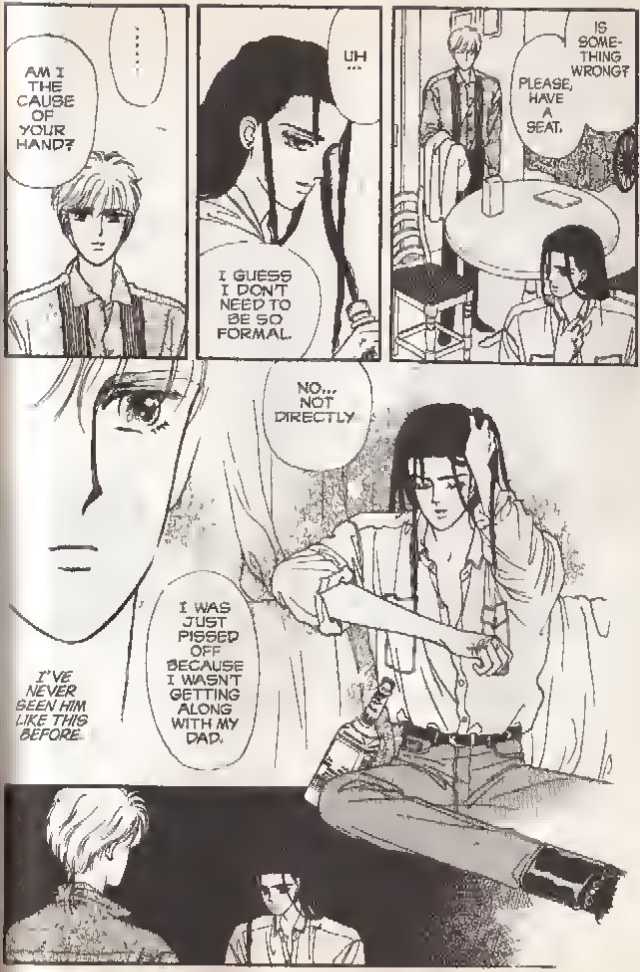
AM I THE CAUSE OF YOUR HAND?
.....
UH ...
I GUESS I DON'T NEED TO BE SO FORMAL.
IS SOME-THING WRONG?
PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT.
NO... NOT DIRECTLY.
I WAS JUST PISSED OFF BECAUSE I WASN'T GETTING ALONG WITH MY DAD.
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE THIS BEFORE.

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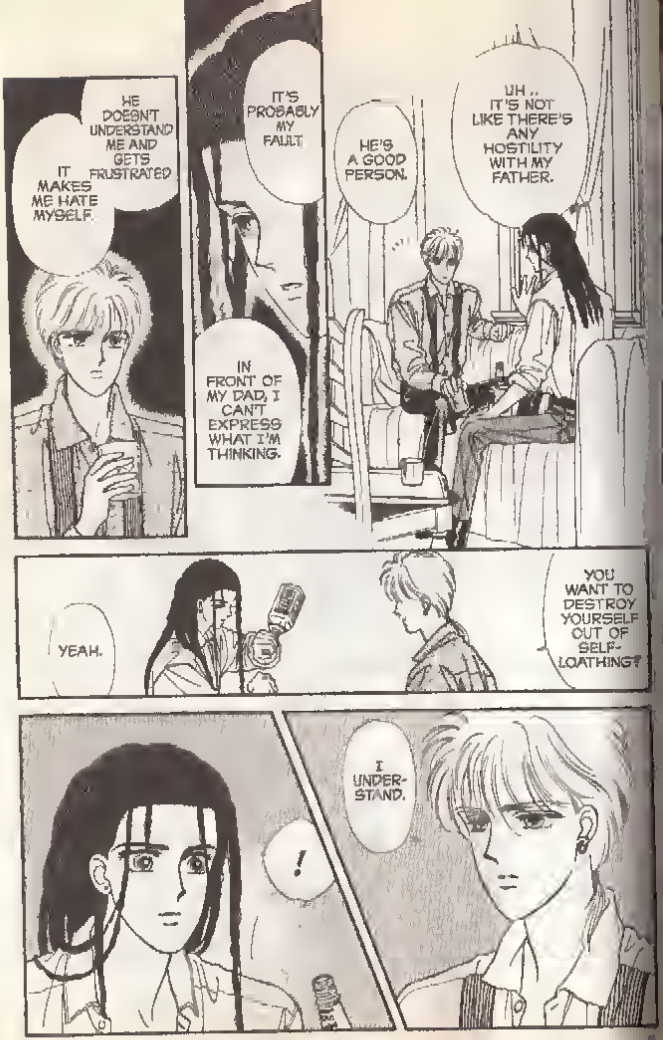
HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ME AND GETS FRUSTRATED
IT MAKES ME HATE MYSELF.
IT'S PROBABLY MY FAULT.
IN FRONT OF MY DAD, I CAN'T EXPRESS WHAT I'M THINKING.
HE'S A GOOD PERSON.
UH .. IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S ANY HOSTILITY WITH MY FATHER.
YEAH.
YOU WANT TO DESTROY YOURSELF OUT OF SELF-LOATHING?
!
I UNDER-STAND.

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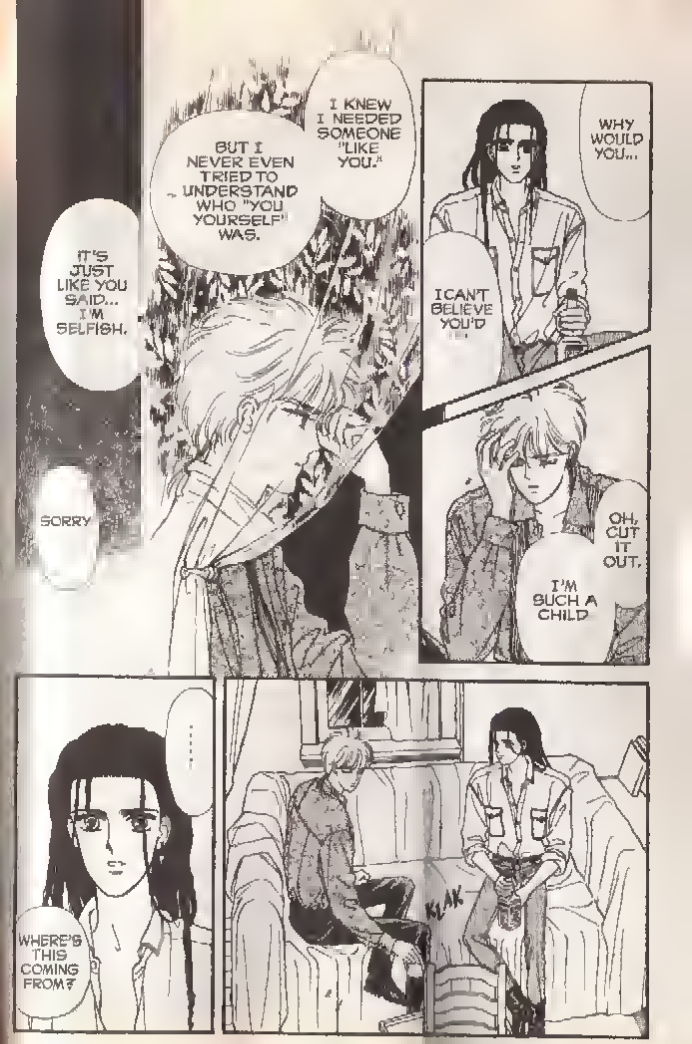
I KNEW I NEEDED SOMEONE "LIKE YOU."
BUT I NEVER EVEN TRIED TO UNDERSTAND WHO "YOU YOURSELF" WAS.
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID... I'M SELFISH.
SORRY
WHY WOULD YOU...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'D
OH, CUT IT OUT.
I'M SUCH A CHILD
.....
WHERE'S THIS COMING FROM?
KLAK

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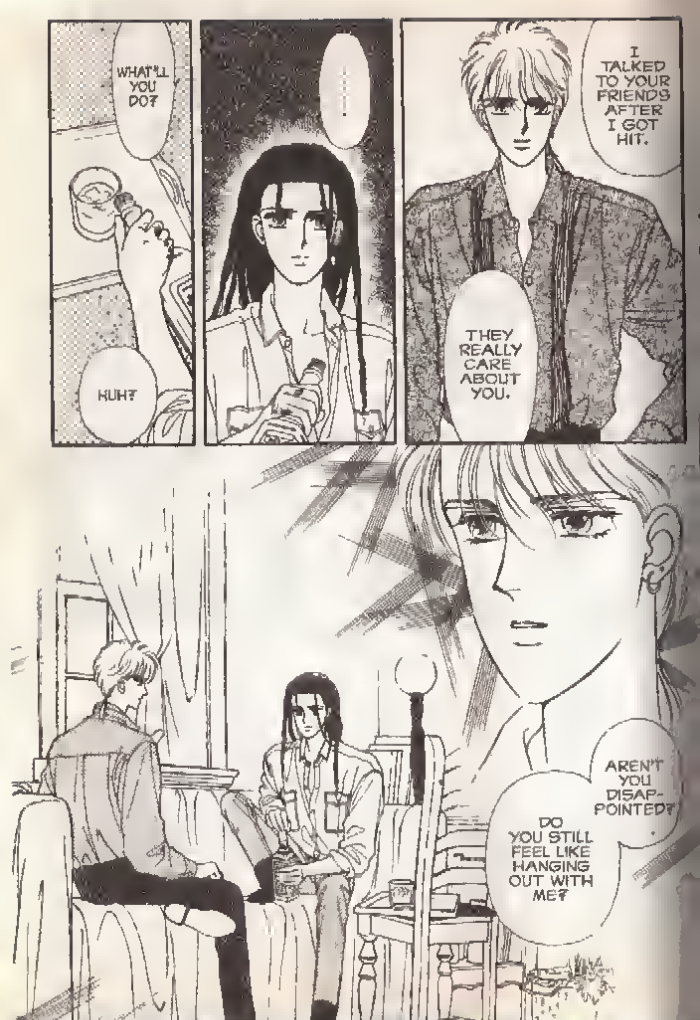
WHAT'LL YOU DO?
HUH?
I TALKED TO YOUR FRIENDS AFTER I GOT HIT.
THEY REALLY CARE ABOUT YOU.
DO YOU STILL FEEL LIKE HANGING OUT WITH ME?
AREN'T YOU DISAP-POINTED?

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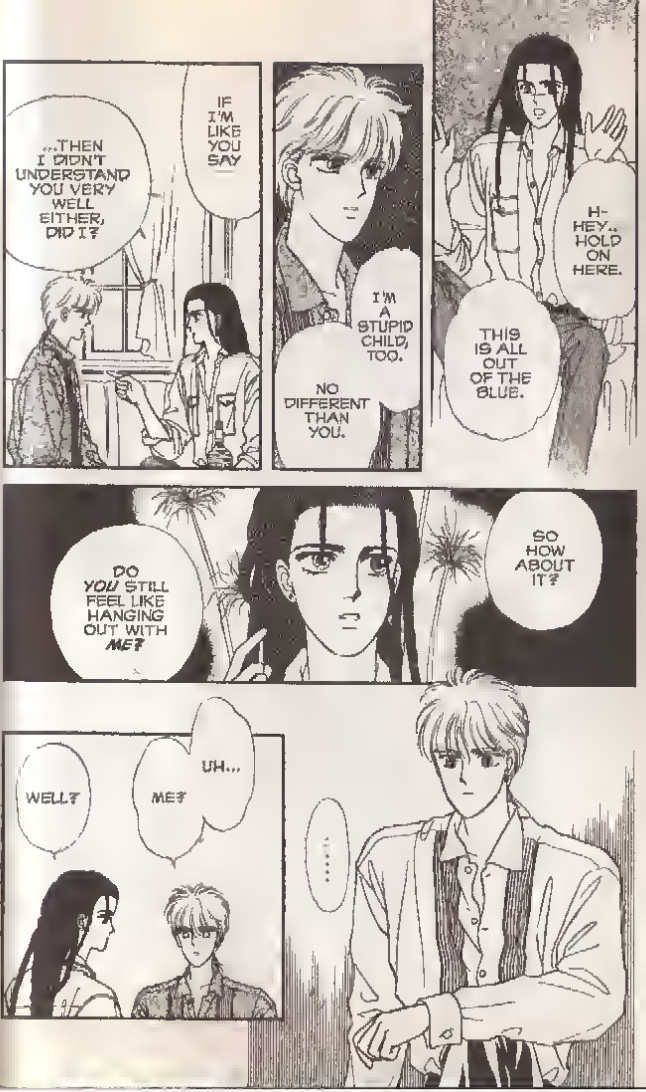
H-HEY.. HOLD ON HERE.
THIS IS ALL OUT OF THE BLUE.
I'M A STUPID CHILD, TOO.
NO DIFFERENT THAN YOU.
IF I'M LIKE YOU SAY
...THEN I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND YOU VERY WELL EITHER, DID I?
SO HOW ABOUT IT?
DO YOU STILL FEEL LIKE HANGING OUT WITH ME?
.....
UH...
ME?
WELL?

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I WASN'T REALLY EXPECTING THIS CONVERSATION TO TURN OUT LIKE THIS.
WAIT A SEC... I'M A LITTLE CONFUSED.
I FEEL THE SAME WAY.
GULP
I CAN SAY IT NOW...
ACTUALLY, LONG AGO...
THUD

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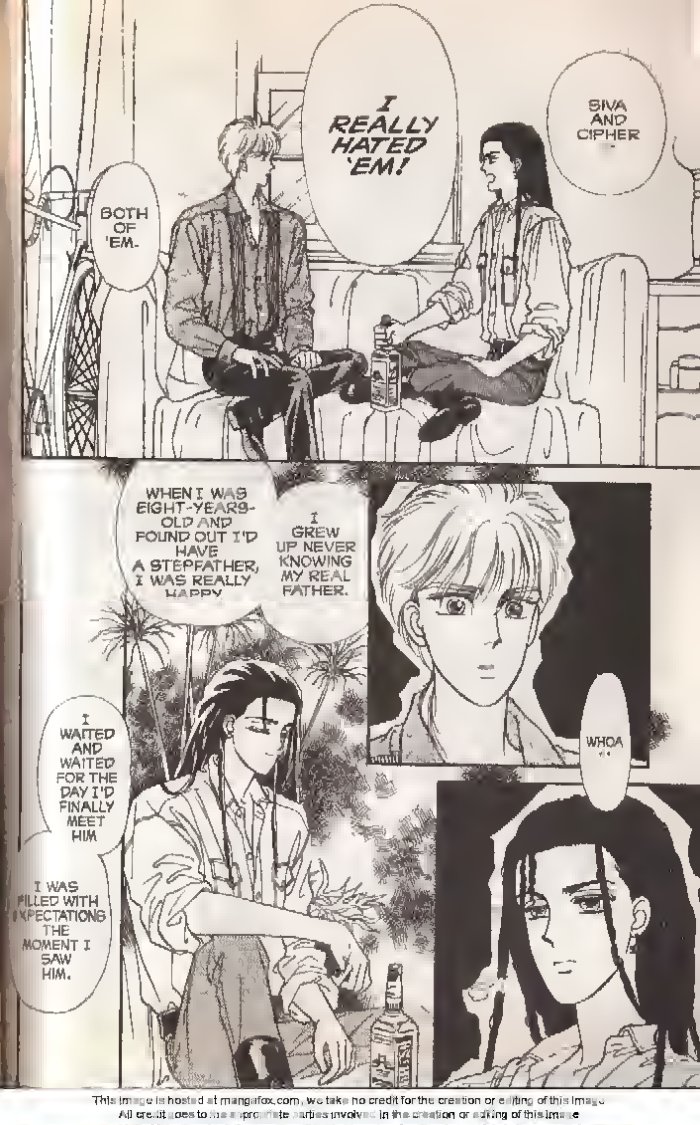
I REALLY HATED 'EM!
SIVA AND CIPHER
BOTH OF 'EM.
WHEN I WAS EIGHT-YEARS-OLD AND FOUND OUT I'D HAVE A STEPFATHER, I WAS REALLY HAPPY
I GREW UP NEVER KNOWING MY REAL FATHER.
WHOA
I WAITED AND WAITED FOR THE DAY I'D FINALLY MEET HIM
I WAS FILLED WITH EXPECTATIONS THE MOMENT I SAW HIM.

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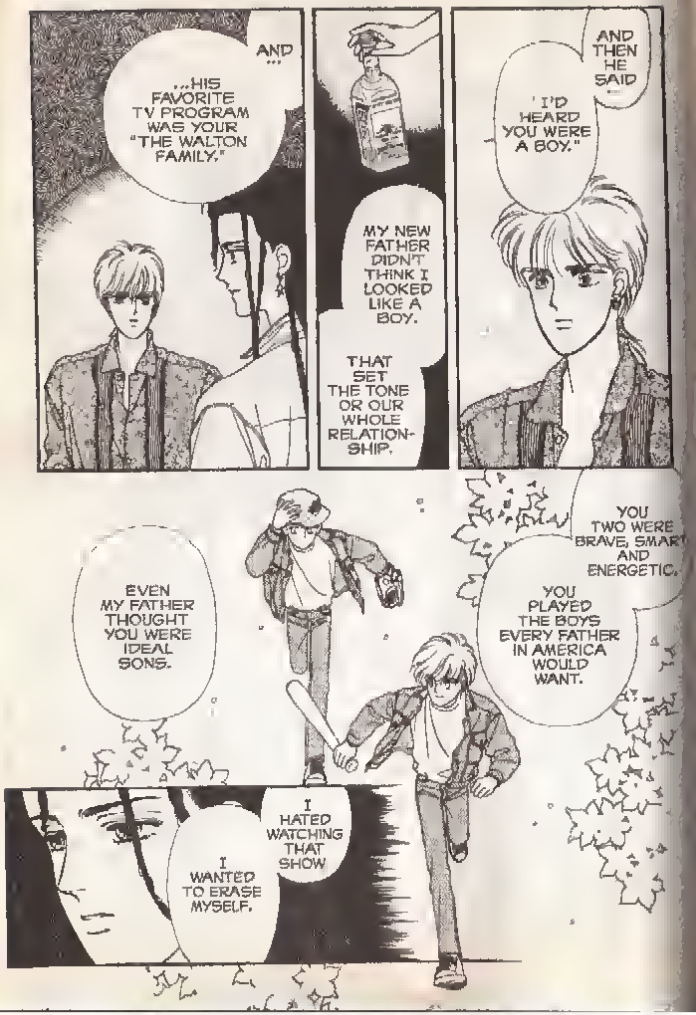
AND ...
...HIS FAVORITE TV PROGRAM WAS YOUR "THE WALTON FAMILY."
MY NEW FATHER DIDN'T THINK I LOOKED LIKE A BOY.
THAT SET THE TONE OR OUR WHOLE RELATION-SHIP.
AND THEN HE SAID ...
"I'D HEARD YOU WERE A BOY."
YOU TWO WERE BRAVE, SMART AND ENERGETIC.
YOU PLAYED THE BOYS EVERY FATHER IN AMERICA WOULD WANT.
EVEN MY FATHER THOUGHT YOU WERE IDEAL SONS.
I HATED WATCHING THAT SHOW
I WANTED TO ERASE MYSELF.

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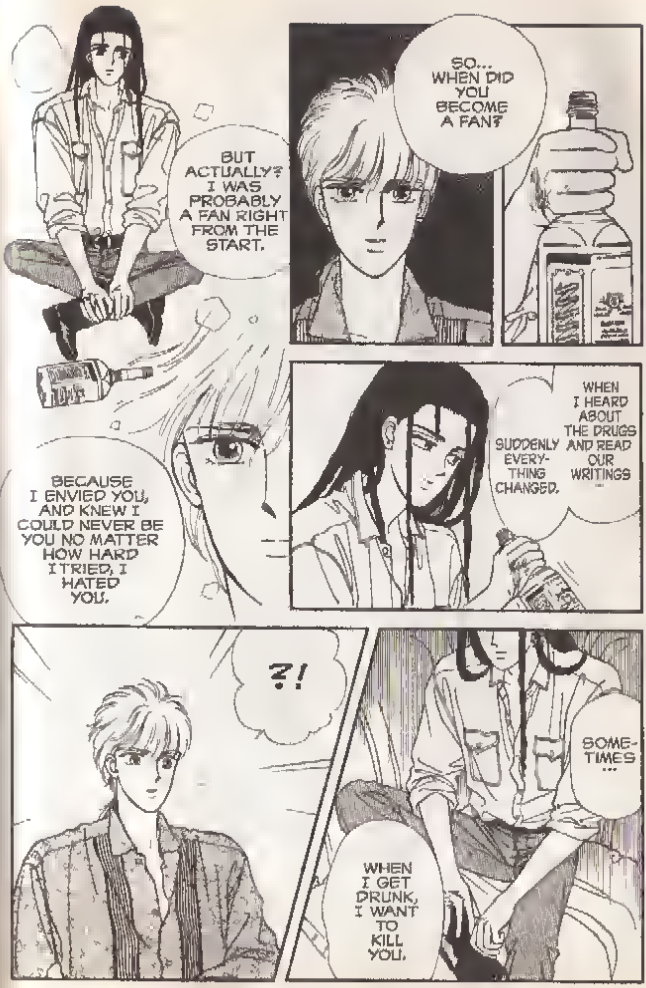
BUT ACTUALLY? I WAS PROBABLY A FAN RIGHT FROM THE START.
SO... WHEN DID YOU BECOME A FAN?
BECAUSE I ENVIED YOU, AND KNEW I COULD NEVER BE YOU NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRIED, I HATED YOU.
SUDDENLY EVERY-THING CHANGED.
WHEN I HEARD ABOUT THE DRUGS AND READ OUR WRITINGS
?!
WHEN I GET DRUNK, I WANT TO KILL YOU.
SOME-TIMES ...

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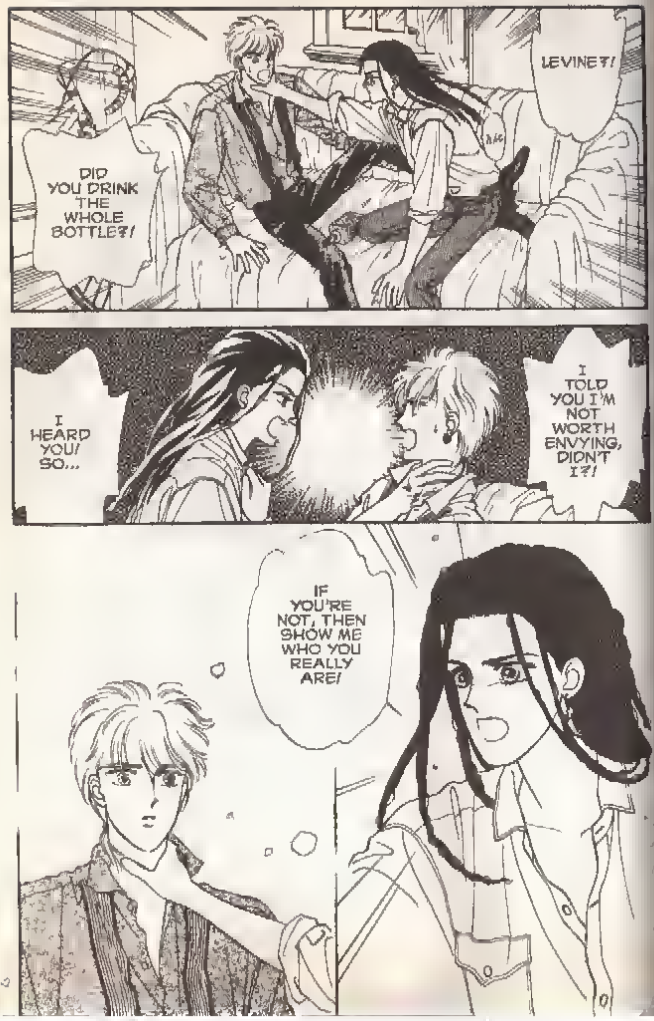
LEVINE?!
DID YOU DRINK THE WHOLE BOTTLE?!
I TOLD YOU I'M NOT WORTH ENVYING, DIDN'T I?!
I HEARD YOU! SO...
IF YOU'RE NOT, THEN SHOW ME WHO YOU REALLY ARE!

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IF YOU'RE NOT, THEN SAY IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN!
I REALLY WANT TO KNOW IT!
FUNNY... YOU'RE PLAYING THIS PART ALL WRONG, "SIVA."
YOU DON'T HAVE THE EXPRESSION OF SOMEONE ABOUT TO BE KILLED.

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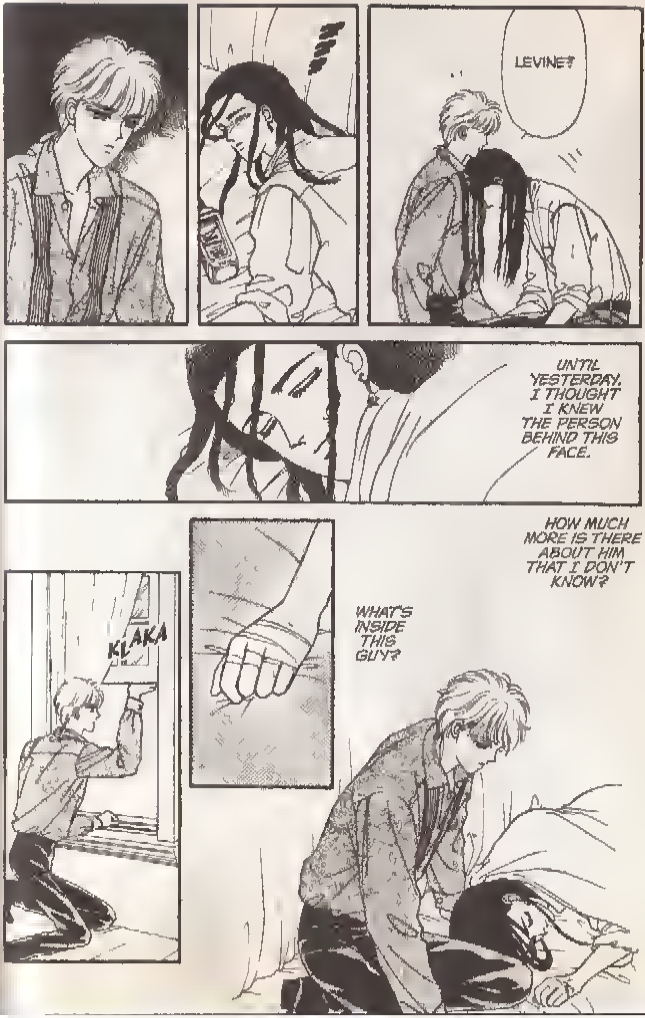
LEVINE?
UNTIL YESTERDAY, I THOUGHT I KNEW THE PERSON BEHIND THIS FACE.
HOW MUCH MORE IS THERE ABOUT HIM THAT I DON'T KNOW?
WHAT'S INSIDE THIS GUY?
KLAKA

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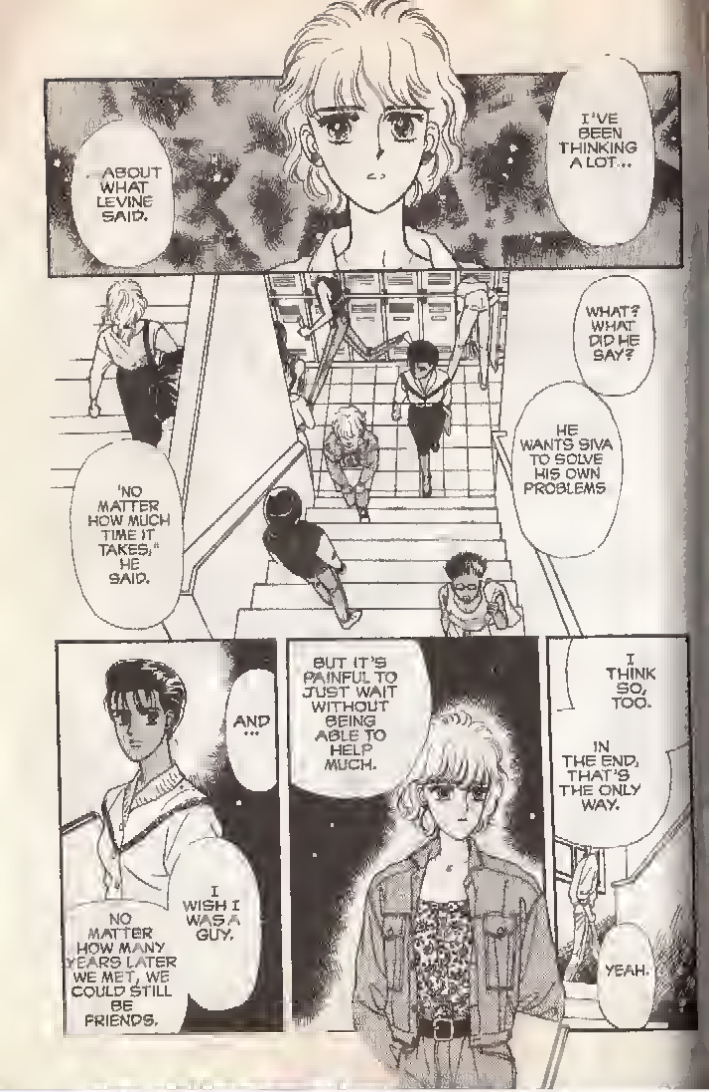
I'VE BEEN THINKING A LOT...
...ABOUT WHAT LEVINE SAID.
WHAT? WHAT DID HE SAY?
HE WANTS SIVA TO SOLVE HIS OWN PROBLEMS
"NO MATTER HOW MUCH TIME IT TAKES," HE SAID.
BUT IT'S PAINFUL TO JUST WAIT WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO HELP MUCH.
I THINK SO, TOO.
IN THE END, THAT'S THE ONLY WAY.
YEAH.
AND ...
I WISH I WAS A GUY.
NO MATTER HOW MANY YEARS LATER WE MET, WE COULD STILL BE FRIENDS.

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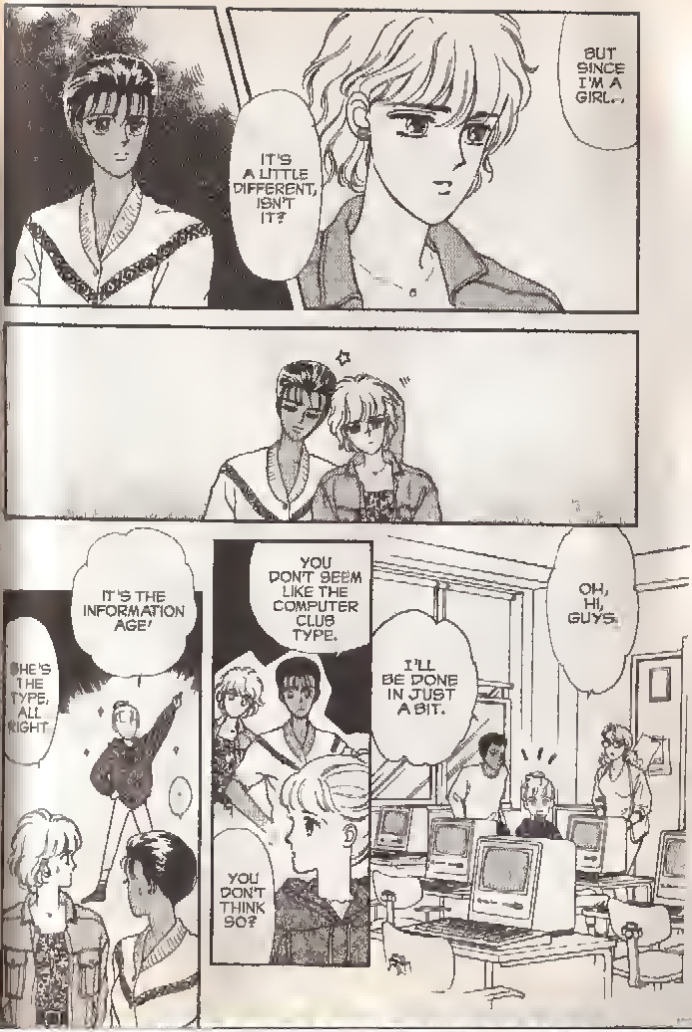
BUT SINCE I'M A GIRL...
IT'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT, ISN'T IT?
OH, HI, GUYS.
I'LL BE DONE IN JUST A BIT.
YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE THE COMPUTER CLUB TYPE.
YOU DON'T THINK SO?
IT'S THE INFORMATION AGE!
SHE'S THE TYPE, ALL RIGHT.

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DOES THIS NETWORK THING GO NATION-WIDE?
SURE. IT GOES ALL OVER THE WORLD.
ANYONE ANYTIME CAN LOAD OR EXTRACT INFORMATION
CAN YOU SEARCH FOR CIPHER ON IT?
WELL...
...I CAN PRETEND I'M AN ORDINARY FAN AND TRY IT.
IT'D BE GREAT IF YOU COULD JUST FIND OUT HOW HE IS.
DO IT!
TAP TAP TAP TAP

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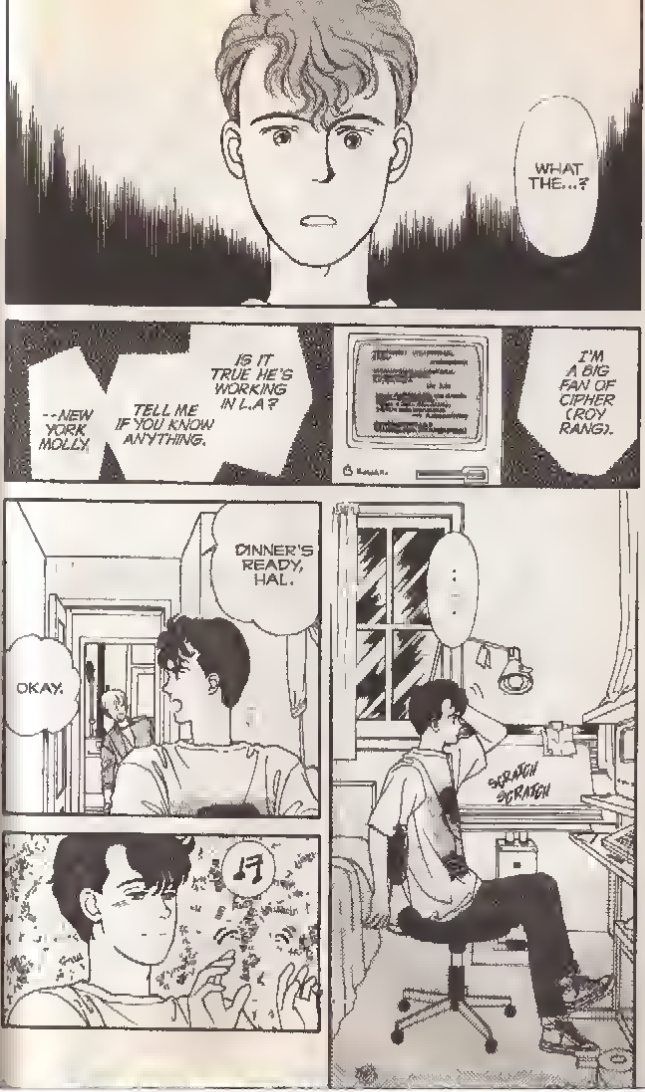
WHAT THE...?
I'M A BIG FAN OF CIPHER (ROY RANG).
IS IT TRUE HE'S WORKING IN L.A?
TELL ME IF YOU KNOW ANYTHING.
--NEW YORK MOLLY.
DINNER'S READY, HAL.
OKAY.
SCRATCH SCRATCH

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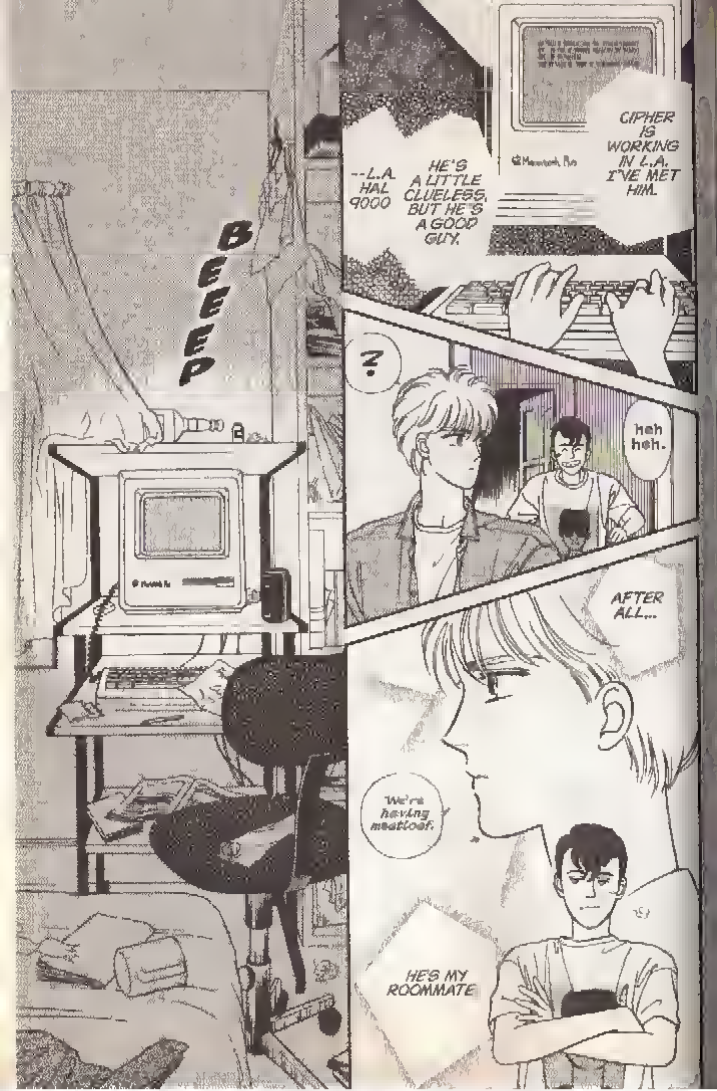

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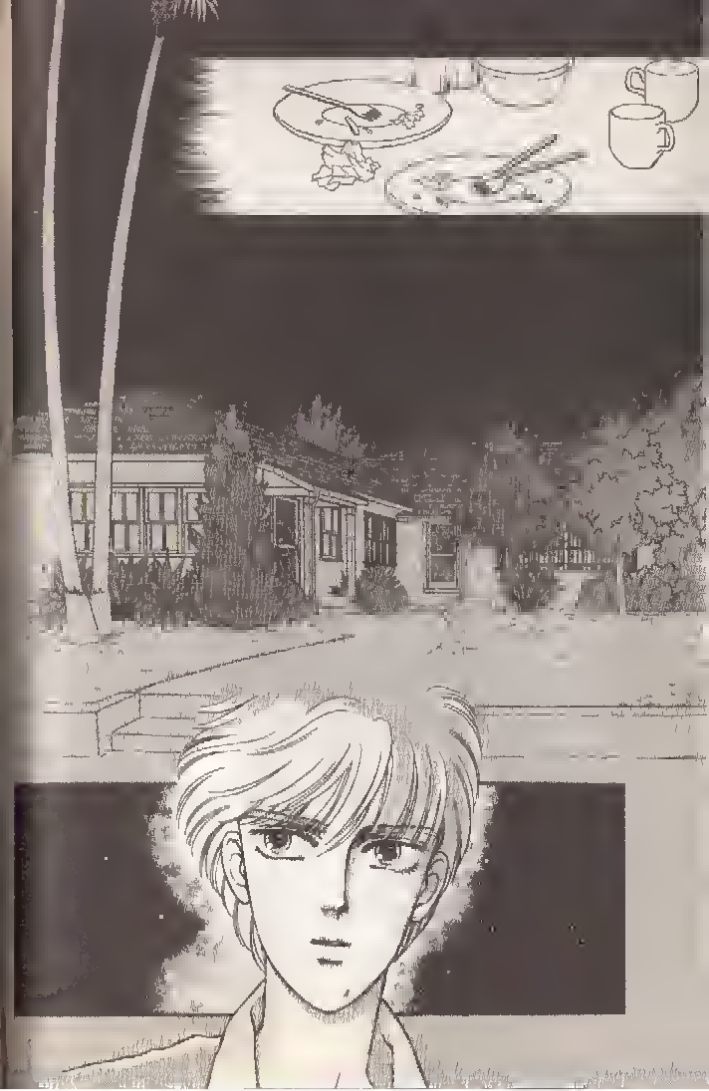

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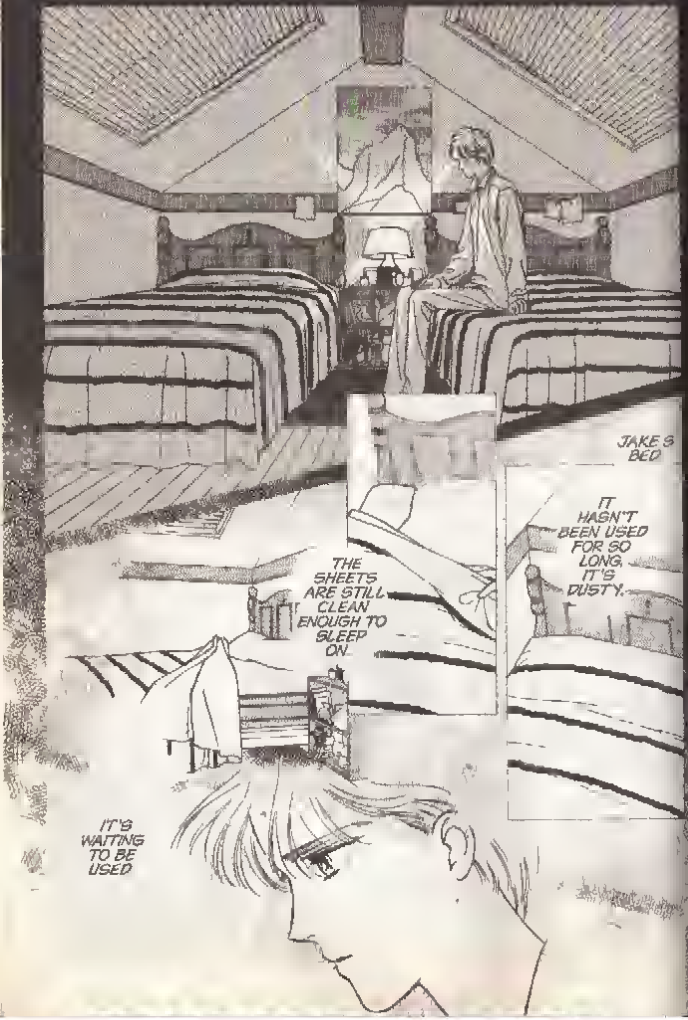

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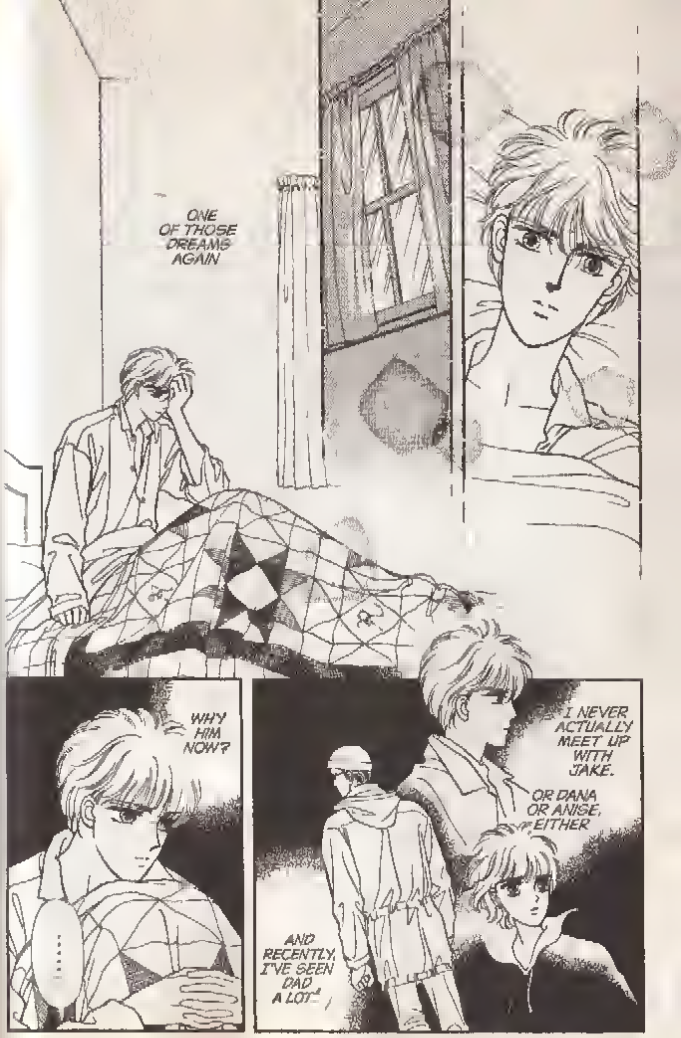
ONE OF THOSE DREAMS AGAIN
WHY HIM NOW?
.....
I NEVER ACTUALLY MEET UP WITH JAKE.
OR DANA OR ANISE, EITHER.
AND RECENTLY, I'VE SEEN DAD A LOT.

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RISE AND SHINE!
BAM
HOW LONG AM I GONNA KEEP HAVING THESE DREAMS?
TMP TMP
KACHAK
THE WEATHER IS GREAT! SO WE'RE GOING TO THE BEACH!
Nishi
DOPPELGANGER
C'MON! IT'S THE WEEKEND! TIME TO PARTY!
Chill out okay?
WHAT FOR? TO SEE THE TOURISTS?

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GIRLFRIEND
EH?
NOT ME.
I'VE GOT A GIRL-FRIEND
YOU'VE GOT A WHAT?!
GASP
TO HECK WITH JUST LOOKING. LET'S GO PICK UP SOME OF 'EM
YEAH. BACK IN NEW YORK.
IS SARAH SEEING ANYONE?
GULP!
...
BUT THAT'S SO FAR FROM HERE.
A HUMAN NEEDS A PART'NER CLOSE ENOUGH TO FEEL THEIR BODY WARMTH.

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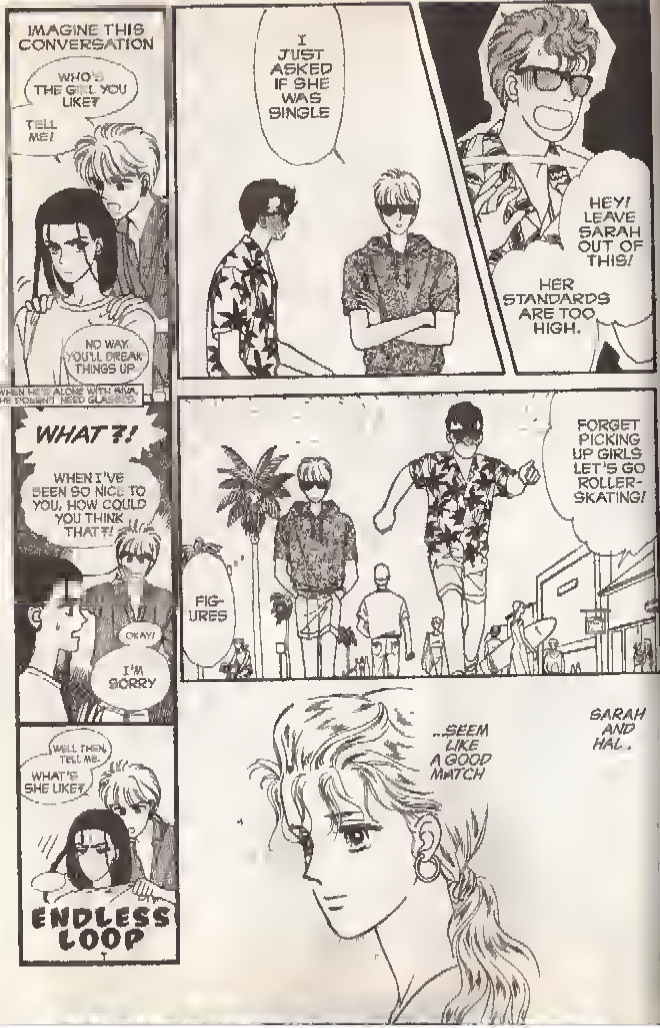
IMAGINE THIS CONVERSATION
WHO'S THE GIRL YOU LIKE?
TELL ME!
NO WAY. YOU'LL BREAK THINGS UP.
WHEN HE'S ALONE WITH ANA HE DOESN'T NEED GLASSES
WHAT?!
WHEN I'VE BEEN SO NICE TO YOU, HOW COULD YOU THINK THAT?!
OKAY!
I'M SORRY
WELL THEN, TELL ME.
WHAT'S SHE LIKE?
ENDLESS LOOP
I JUST ASKED IF SHE WAS SINGLE
HEY! LEAVE SARAH OUT OF THIS!
HER STANDARDS ARE TOO HIGH.
FIG-URES
FORGET PICKING UP GIRLS LET'S GO ROLLER-SKATING!
..SEEM LIKE A GOOD MATCH
SARAH AND HAL.

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WOW! VOLLEYBALL! LET'S GO PLAY!
HE TIRES OF THINGS QUICKLY, BUT...
COMPARED TO HOW LAID-BACK SARAH IS...
...HAL LOOKS A LITTLE WACKY, BUT HE CAN HANDLE THINGS PRETTY WELL.
WAVE WAVE
CAN WE PLAY, TOO?
HEY!
IT'S BORING TO PLAY BY OUR-
Yah
YOU CAN GO ONE ON EACH SIDE.
GREAT! THANKS!
TOTAL STRANGERS
SURE! COME ON!
DID YOU SAY SOME-THING?
LET'S GO. THEY'RE CALLING US.
Arabesque

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I WISH I'D MET YOU WHEN I WAS A KID.
WHY?
...
YOU DON'T "MAKE," YOU "BE" FRIENDS.
DON'T YOU KNOW ANY-THING?
THEN MAYBE I WOULD HAVE QUIT ACTING.
IN JUNIOR HIGH, SCHOOL AND SPORTS STARTED GETTING INTERESTING, AND I THOUGHT ABOUT IT
QUIT ACT-ING?
REALLY? WHAT SPORTS?
TRACK

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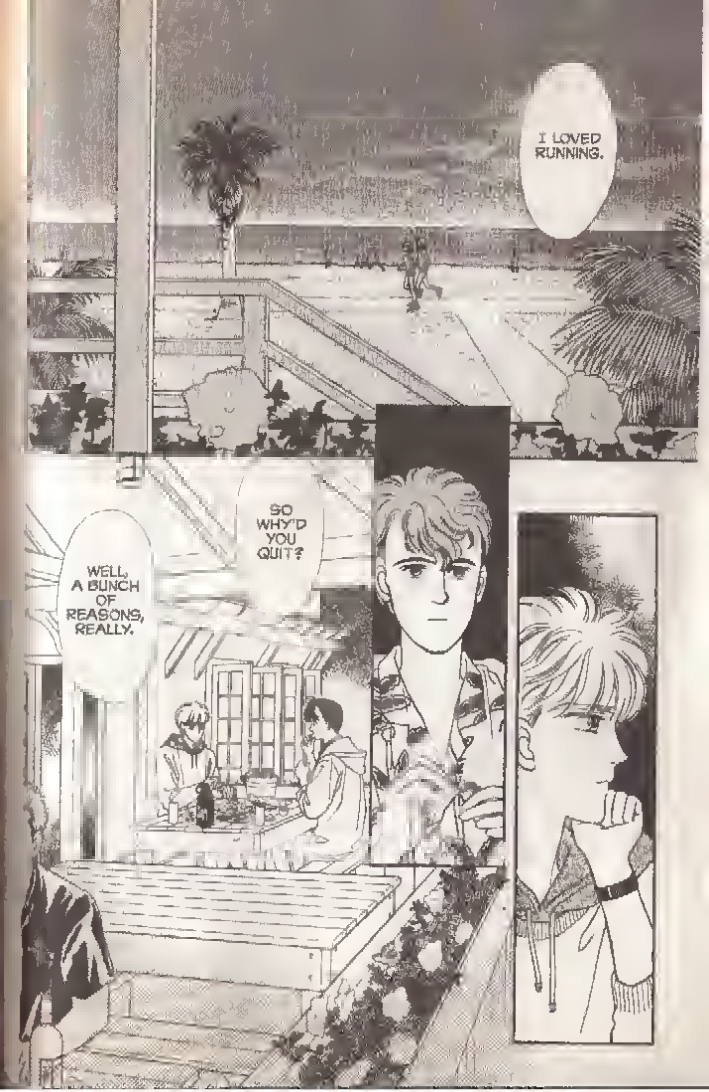

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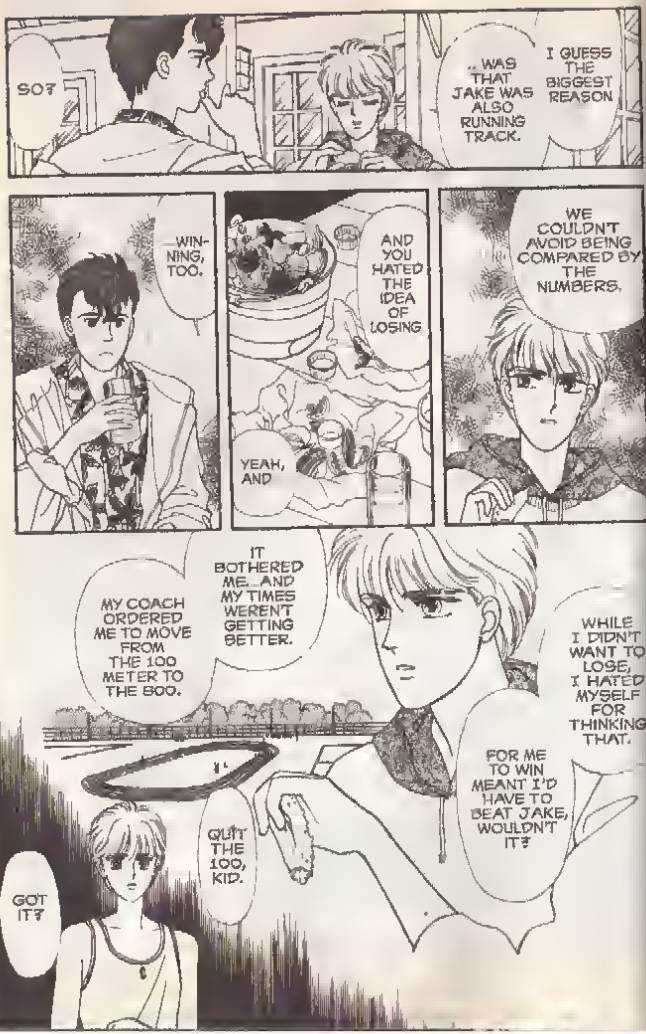
SO?
..WAS THAT JAKE WAS ALSO RUNNING TRACK.
I GUESS THE BIGGEST REASON
-WIN-NING, TOO.
AND YOU HATED THE IDEA OF LOSING
YEAH, AND
WE COULDN'T AVOID BEING COMPARED BY THE NUMBERS.
MY COACH ORDERED ME TO MOVE FROM THE 100 METER TO THE 800.
IT BOTHERED ME. AND MY TIMES WEREN'T GETTING BETTER.
WHILE I DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE, I HATED MYSELF FOR THINKING THAT.
FOR ME TO WIN MEANT I'D HAVE TO BEAT JAKE, WOULDN'T IT?
QUIT THE 100, KID.
GOT IT?

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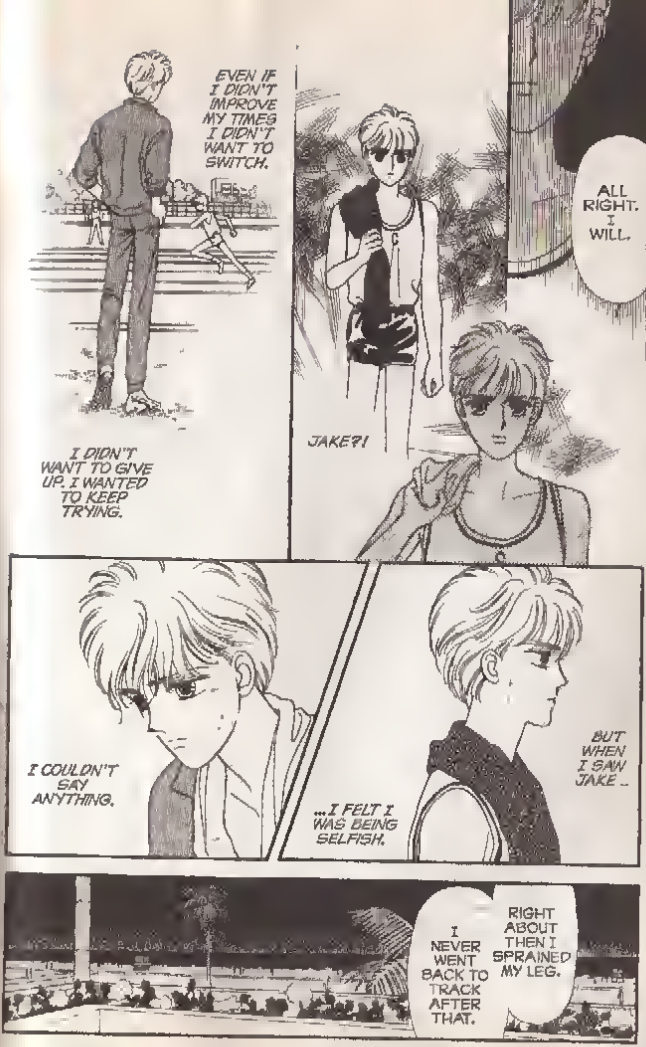
EVEN IF I DIDN'T IMPROVE MY TIMES I DIDN'T WANT TO SWITCH.
I DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE UP. I WANTED TO KEEP TRYING.
ALL RIGHT. I WILL.
JAKE?!
I COULDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
...I FELT I WAS BEING SELFISH.
BUT WHEN I SAW JAKE...
RIGHT ABOUT THEN I SPRAINED MY LEG.
I NEVER WENT BACK TO TRACK AFTER THAT.

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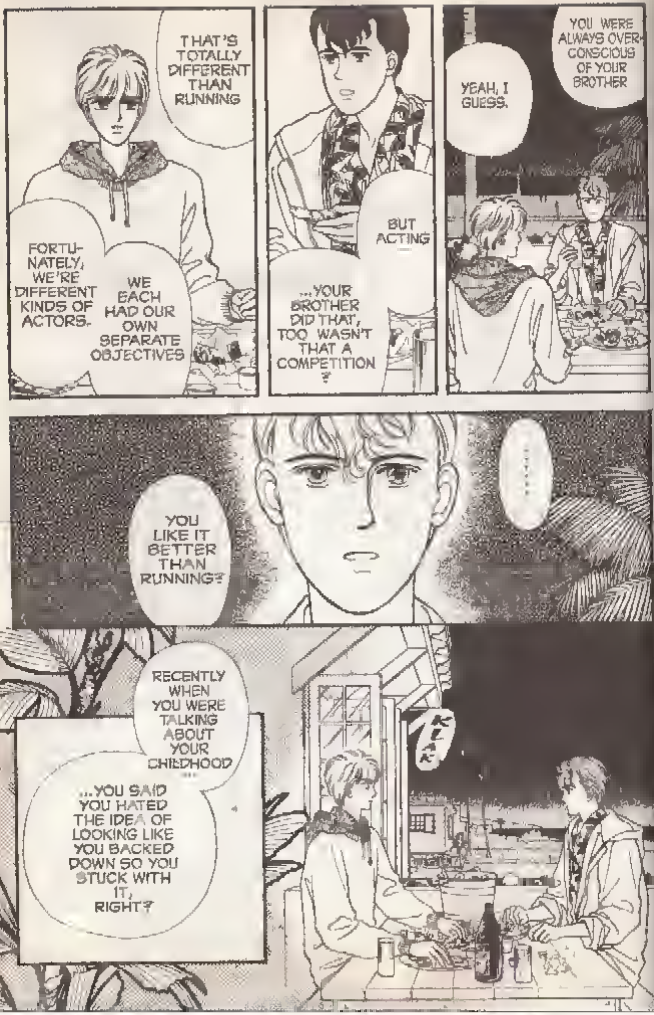
THAT'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT THAN RUNNING
FORTUNATELY, WE'RE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ACTORS.
WE EACH HAD OUR OWN SEPARATE OBJECTIVES
BUT ACTING
...YOUR BROTHER DID THAT, TOO. WASN'T THAT A COMPETITION?
YEAH, I GUESS.
YOU WERE ALWAYS OVER-CONSCIOUS OF YOUR BROTHER
YOU LIKE IT BETTER THAN RUNNING?
RECENTLY WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT YOUR CHILDHOOD
...YOU SAID YOU HATED THE IDEA OF LOOKING LIKE YOU BACKED DOWN SO YOU STUCK WITH IT, RIGHT?
KYAK

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I LOVE IT.
I THINK.
WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?
DO YOU LOVE ACTING, OR DO YOU HATE IT?
SO WHAT ABOUT THIS?
I LOVE IT!
YOU "THINK"?
GO OUT AND HAVE SOME FUN.
BUT IF YOU HATE IT, THEN GO AHEAD AND QUIT
THAT'S OKAY. I HAD PLENTY OF FUN ON THE SHOW
GASP
HM.
THEN I GUESS YOU'VE GOT NO COMPLAINTS
I LOVE IT SO MUCH I HATE IT
.. EVEN WHEN SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED, I LOVED WORKING.
EVEN BACK WHEN I WAS A KID...

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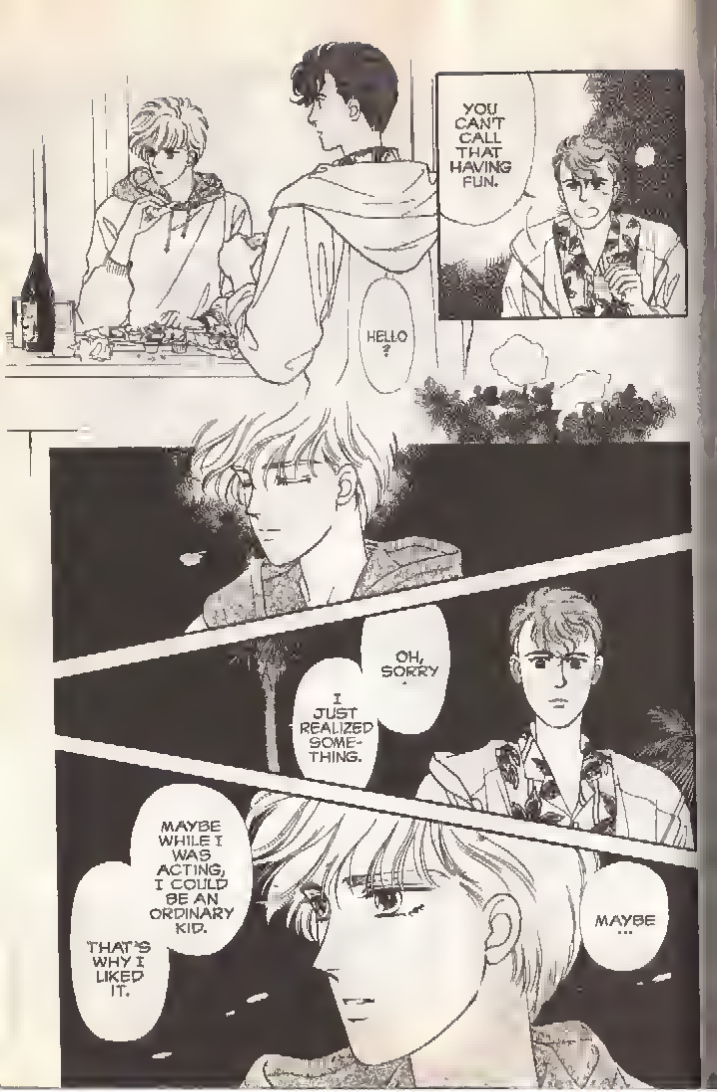
YOU CAN'T CALL THAT HAVING FUN.
HELLO ?
OH, SORRY
I JUST REALIZED SOME-THING.
MAYBE WHILE I WAS ACTING, I COULD BE AN ORDINARY KID.
THAT'S WHY I LIKED IT.
MAYBE ...

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THAT'S A CONTRA DICTION
BUT IT'S THE TRUTH.
AND EVEN AFTER-WARD'S...
WHAT WITH JEAN, AND DAD'S THING, AND THE SHARING AN IDENTITY
IT FELT MORE FREE TO BE ACTING.
...IT WAS ALWAYS HAPPIER TO BE INSIDE THE SHOW.

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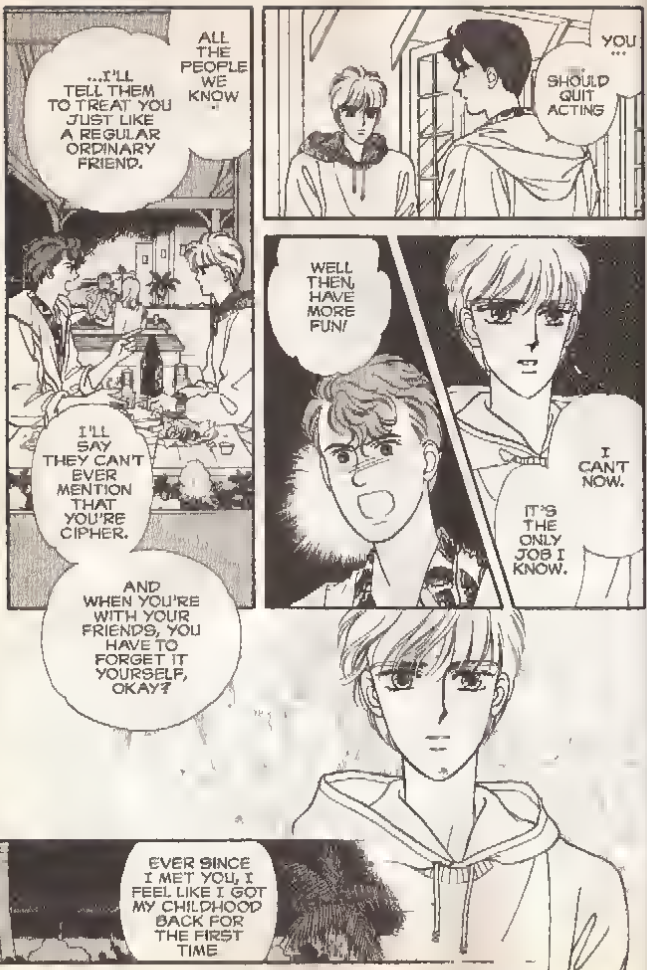
ALL THE PEOPLE WE KNOW
...I'LL TELL THEM TO TREAT YOU JUST LIKE A REGULAR ORDINARY FRIEND.
I'LL SAY THEY CAN'T EVER MENTION THAT YOU'RE CIPHER.
AND WHEN YOU'RE WITH YOUR FRIENDS, YOU HAVE TO FORGET IT YOURSELF, OKAY?
YOU ...
SHOULD QUIT ACTING
WELL THEN, HAVE MORE FUN!
I CAN'T NOW.
IT'S THE ONLY JOB I KNOW.
EVER SINCE I MET YOU, I FEEL LIKE I GOT MY CHILDHOOD BACK FOR THE FIRST TIME

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YES!!
THE MEAL'S ON ME.
DOPPELGANGER AGAIN
ONLY GRATITUDE? THAT'S ALL?
ISN'T THERE SOMETHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO TELL ME? GO ON, SAY IT.
I wasn't talking about money!
Wait... not that!
WHEN I'M AROUND HAL...
...I CAN'T KEEP UP MY NORMAL ROUTINE.

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BY LAYING BARE MY FEELINGS I'M REALIZING A NEW SELF I NEVER KNEW ABOUT BEFORE.
MY DREAMS ARE GOING TO A DEEPER PLACE THAN EVER
WHEN IT'S ALL OVER WHAT WILL BECOME OF ME?
LIKE AN UNCONSCIOUS REGRESSION
HOW WILL BE I DIFFERENT?

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HEY, ANISE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING AFTER THIS?
I'M GOING TO SIVA'S.
HE INVITED ME OVER.
WOW! IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
IT'S BEEN WEIRD THESE LAST FEW DAYS.
WHETHER HE'S CALM OR ENERGETIC, SIVA'S HAD A STRANGE AURA AROUND HIM
WELL, THAT'S AN IMPROVEMENT, ISN'T IT?
I GUESS ANYWAY, I BETTER GO.

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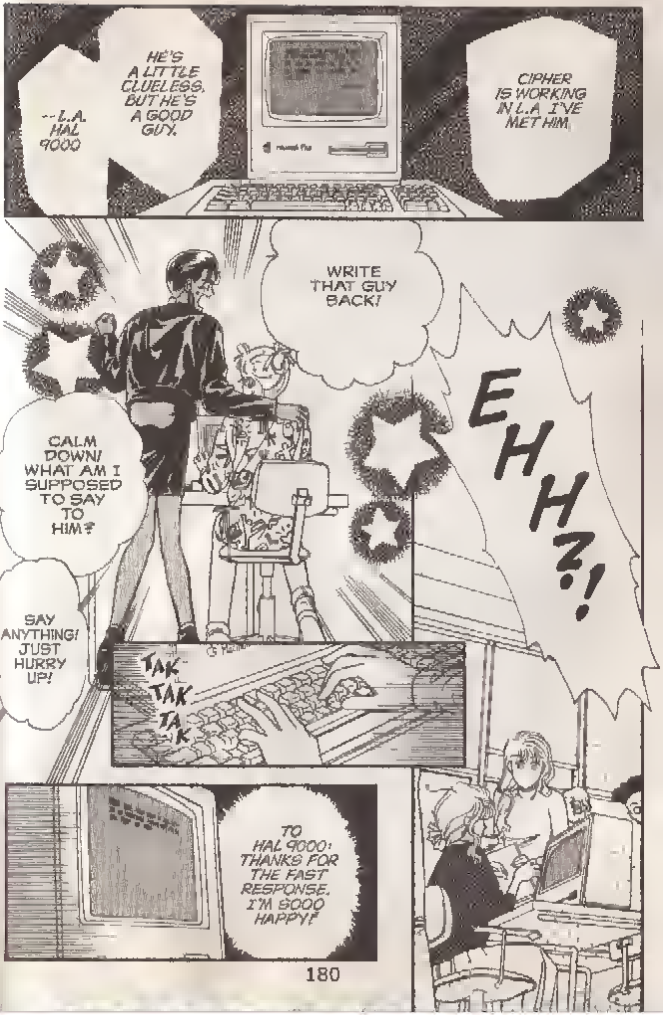
--L.A. HAL 9000
HE'S A LITTLE CLUELESS, BUT HE'S A GOOD GUY.
CIPHER IS WORKING IN L.A. I'VE MET HIM.
WRITE THAT GUY BACK!
EHH?!
CALM DOWN! WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY TO HIM?
SAY ANYTHING! JUST HURRY UP!
TAK TAK TA K
TO HAL 9000: THANKS FOR THE FAST RESPONSE. I'M SOOO HAPPY!

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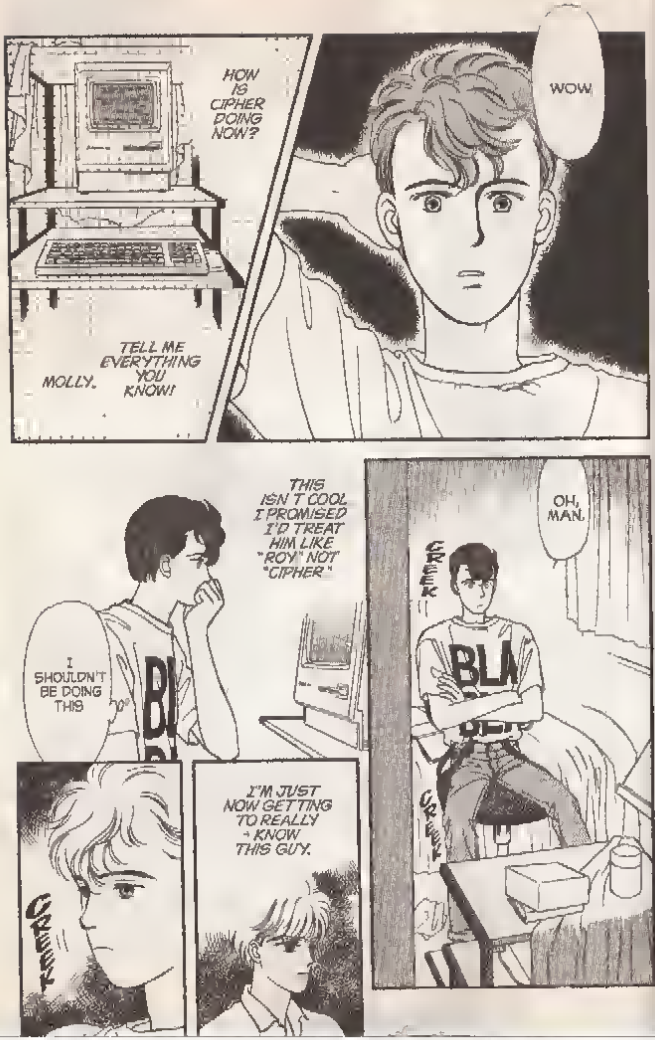

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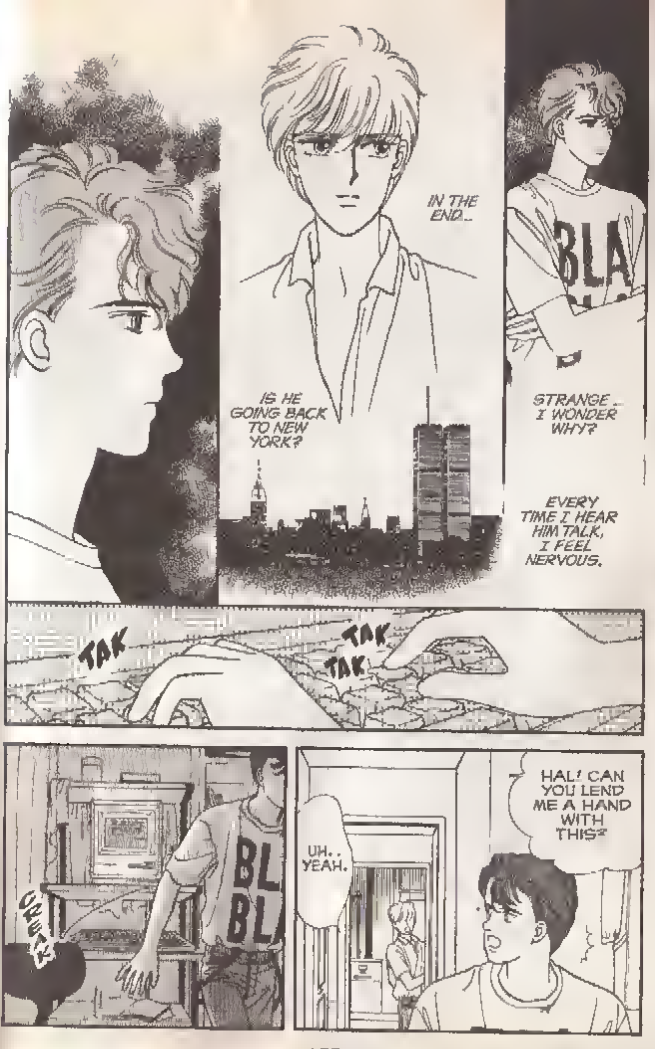

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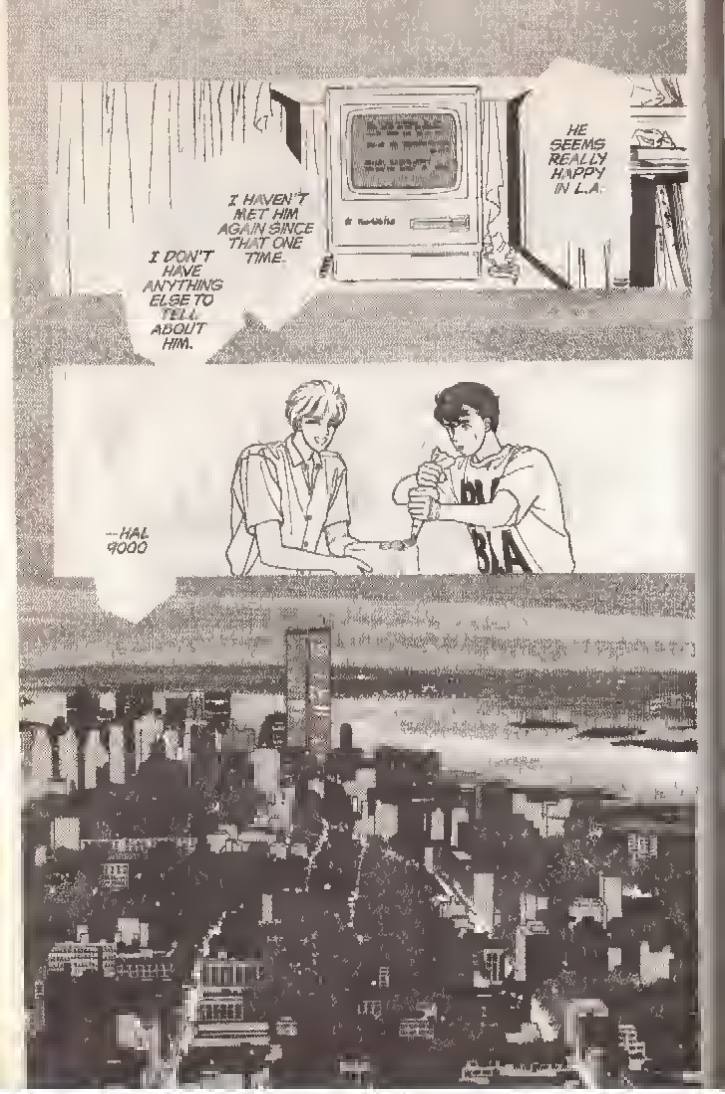

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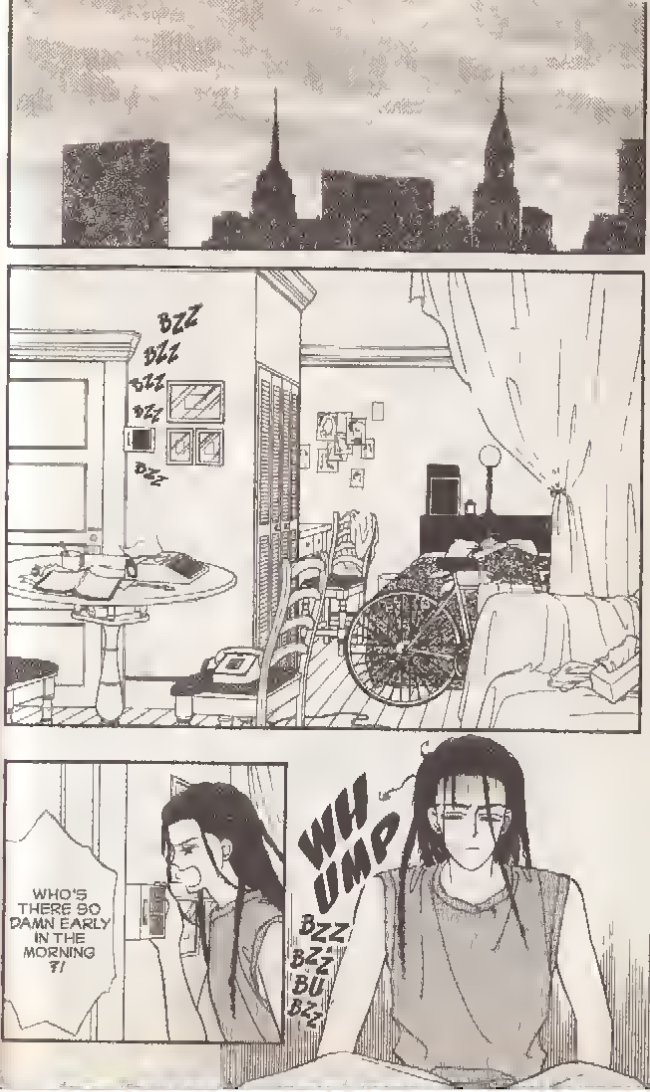

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YOU HAVE YOUR DOG-WALKING JOB THIS MORNING, RIGHT?
YOU PROMISED I COULD COME WITH YOU
OH, YEAH.
IT'S ALREADY FIVE-THIRTY. THE SUN'S UP
BA TAN
DO ALL INDIANS GET UP THIS EARLY? IT'S ONLY FIVE-THIRTY.
NO!
TODAY I'M INDIAN, NOT CHINESE!
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A DOG SINCE I WAS A KID.
THE JOB DOESN'T START UNTIL SEVEN-THIRTY
BUT... WHY?
I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO IT SO MUCH, I WOKE UP EARLY.
'NIGHT.

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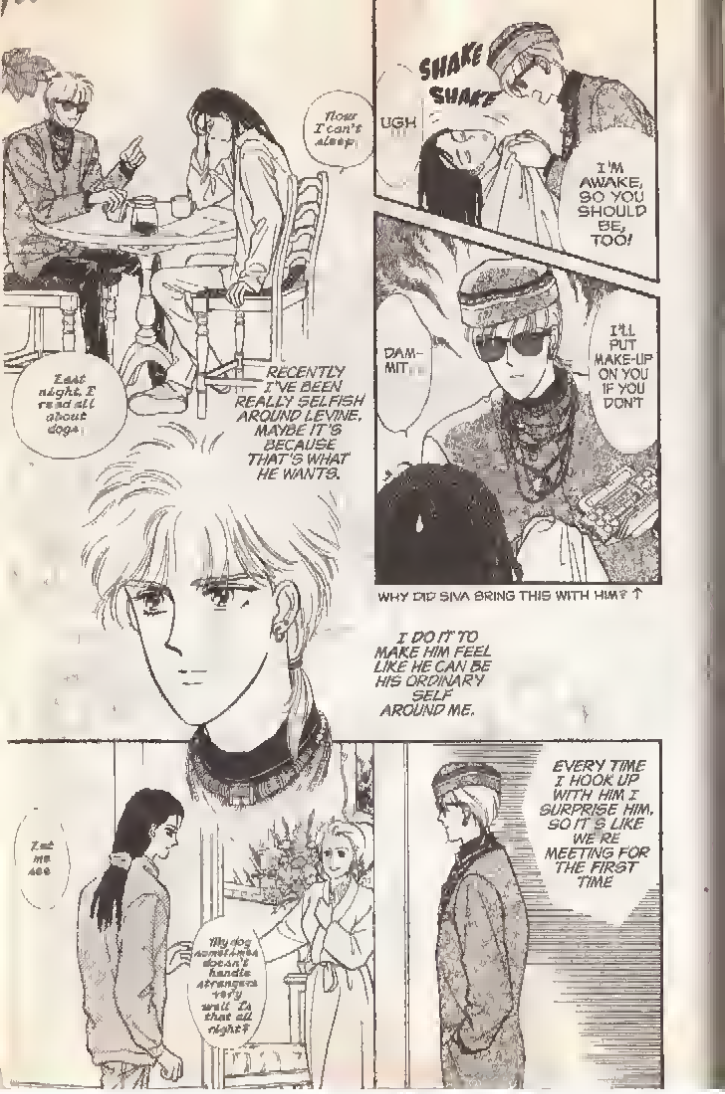
Now I can't sleep!
Last night I read all about dogs!
RECENTLY I'VE BEEN REALLY SELFISH AROUND LEVINE. MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT HE WANTS.
SHAKE SHAKE
UGH
I'M AWAKE, SO YOU SHOULD BE, TOO!
DAM-MIT
I'LL PUT MAKE-UP ON YOU IF YOU DON'T
WHY DID SIVA BRING THIS WITH HIM? ↑
I DO IT TO MAKE HIM FEEL LIKE HE CAN BE HIS ORDINARY SELF AROUND ME.
Let me see
My dog sometimes doesn't handle strangers very well. Is that all right?
EVERY TIME I HOOK UP WITH HIM I SURPRISE HIM, SO IT'S LIKE WE'RE MEETING FOR THE FIRST TIME

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TERENCE TRENT DARBY
N.F.N.F

HE HAS NO INTEREST IN SINGING PERFECTLY OR WRITING PERFECT SONGS. HE'S GOT A FRESH SOUND THAT DOESN'T FIT ANY PATTERN, AND MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I LISTENED THROUGH HEADPHONES WITH MY EYES CLOSED, BUT I FELT HE WAS SINGING THERE IN THE SAME ROOM WITH ME. AFTER HEARING HIS WICKED LAUGH, I FELT THAT IF HE DIED, I'D BE SAD TO REMEMBER HIM LIKE THIS WHEN I WAS DONE LISTENING, I WAS LEFT NOT WITH THE MUSIC OR THE MUSICIAN BUT WITH TERENCE THE PERSON THAT'S MY PERSONAL IMPRESSION OF THIS RECORD.

IN MY HEAD, HE'S SAYING "UNFORTUNATELY I'M NOT IMPORTANT TO YOU BUT THAT'S NOT HOW I WANT TO BE THOUGHT OF." ACTUALLY I THINK HE WANTS TO BE IMPORTANT TO SOMEBODY. BY LETTING ALL THE FANS HEAR THIS ALBUM IT'S HIS WAY OF SAYING "YOU'RE AN IMPORTANT PERSON TO ME." HE'S SO MEAN!

The stronger male

IT'S EASY TO GET A DOG TO OBEY.

WELL WELL, WHAT'S ALL THIS?

DAD! UH... HI.

EVEN THOUGH IT'S THE WEEKEND, YOU'RE UP SO EARLY

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THIS DOG?

OH... IT'S MY JOB.

SHOW YOUR FACE AT THE HOUSE SOMETIME. YOUR MOTHER WORRIES ABOUT YOU.

YES, I WILL SOON.

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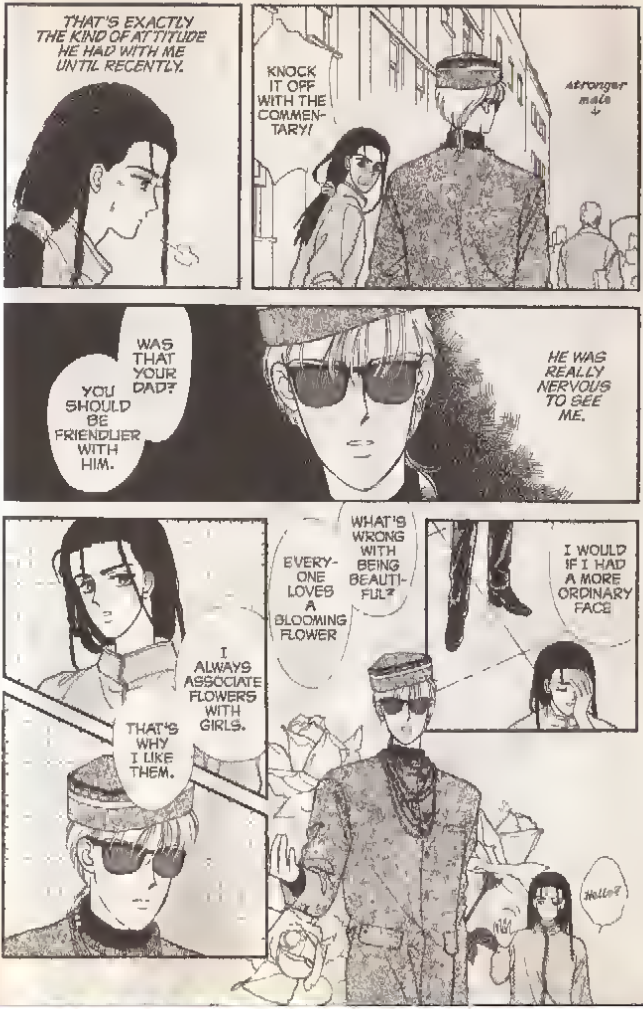
THAT'S EXACTLY THE KIND OF ATTITUDE HE HAD WITH ME UNTIL RECENTLY.
KNOCK IT OFF WITH THE COMMEN-TARY!
stronger male
WAS THAT YOUR DAD?
YOU SHOULD BE FRIENDLIER WITH HIM.
HE WAS REALLY NERVOUS TO SEE ME.
I ALWAYS ASSOCIATE FLOWERS WITH GIRLS.
THAT'S WHY I LIKE THEM.
EVERY-ONE LOVES A BLOOMING FLOWER
WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING BEAUTI-FUL?
I WOULD IF I HAD A MORE ORDINARY FACE
Hello?

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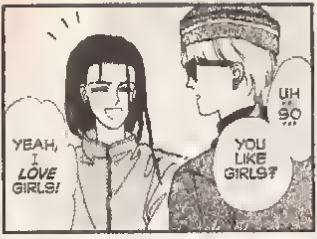

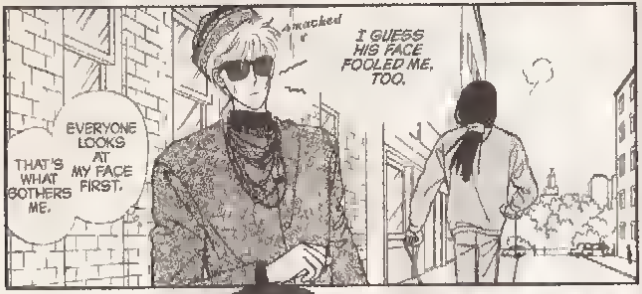

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THEY'RE SHEEP-HERDING DOGS.
I KNOW THIS BREED.
WOW
SHEEPHERDERS! THEY LEAD AND WATCH SHEEP AND COWS.
I WAS AFRAID I'D GET ATTACHED TO THEM, SO I NEVER STARTED WEARING THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE.
KEEP THOSE ON FOR A WHILE.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT.
2nd DOG
HEY!
GET BACK HERE, YOU IDIOT!
PLEASE LET THEM OUT TO PLAY.
WHO'S HERDING WHO?
DON'T TAKE A DUMP OVER THERE, YOU MISERABLE MUTT!
WATCH OUT! THAT'S DANGEROUS!

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I THINK THAT YOU'RE JUST TOO COLD.
YUFF
YUFF
YOU SURE GET ANGRY A LOT.
OR MAYBE YOU HAVE MOOD SWINGS.
FINALLY GOT THEM ALL IN THE CRATE.
Stop licking me!
HE'S LOOKING MORE LIKE A REGULAR GUY.
NO MATTER WHAT HE SAYS, HE LIKES DOGS.
IT LOOKS TIRING, WATCHING YOU DO IT.
YOU SHOULD SHOW MORE EMOTION
OH, AND HOLDING IT IN IS BETTER?
DO YOU REMEMBER DROPPING THAT?
hm?

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A BABY SPARROW?
SIVA! LONG TIME NO SEE!
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING SINCE GRADUATION?
RRRING
RRRING
A CHICK SHE FED BIRD FOOD TO DIED.
HUH? WHAT ABOUT BIRD FOOD?
It's eating bread.
SHE SAID THEY LIKE WORMS THE BEST. GIVE IT ONE EVERY TIME IT CHIRPS.
CHEEP CHEEP
OKAY, I SEE
CHEEP CHEEP
CHEEP CHEEP
IF I HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS, I'LL CALL YOU.
THANKS
THE AMERICAN BOYS HANDY BOOK

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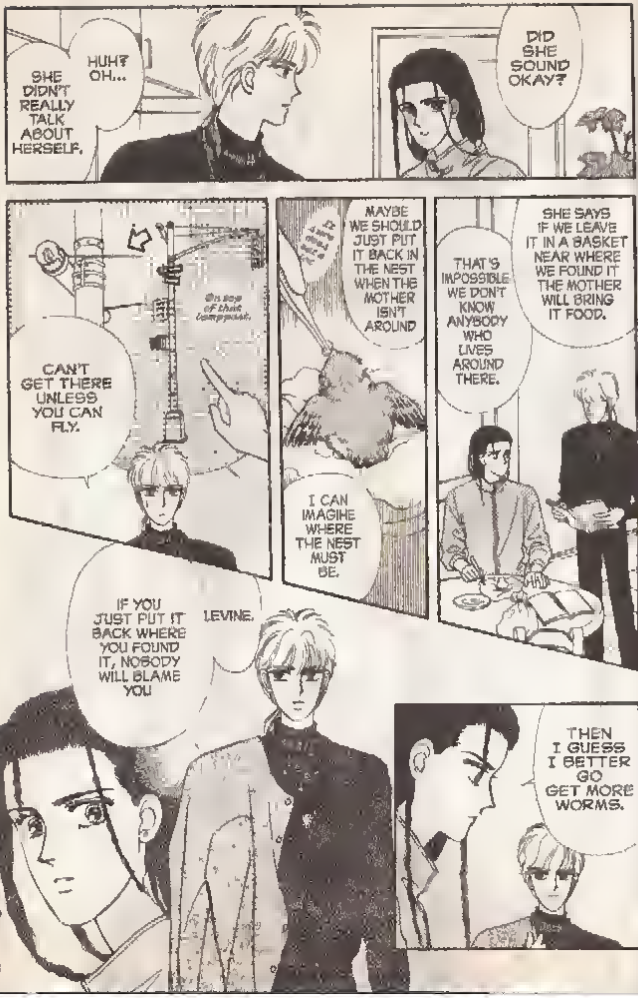
SHE DIDN'T REALLY TALK ABOUT HERSELF.
HUH? OH...
DID SHE SOUND OKAY?
CAN'T GET THERE UNLESS YOU CAN FLY.
On top of that campground.
MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST PUT IT BACK IN THE NEST WHEN THE MOTHER ISN'T AROUND
I CAN IMAGINE WHERE THE NEST MUST BE.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE WE DON'T KNOW ANYBODY WHO LIVES AROUND THERE.
SHE SAYS IF WE LEAVE IT IN A BASKET NEAR WHERE WE FOUND IT THE MOTHER WILL BRING IT FOOD.
IF YOU JUST PUT IT BACK WHERE YOU FOUND IT, NOBODY WILL BLAME YOU
LEVINE.
THEN I GUESS I BETTER GO GET MORE WORMS.

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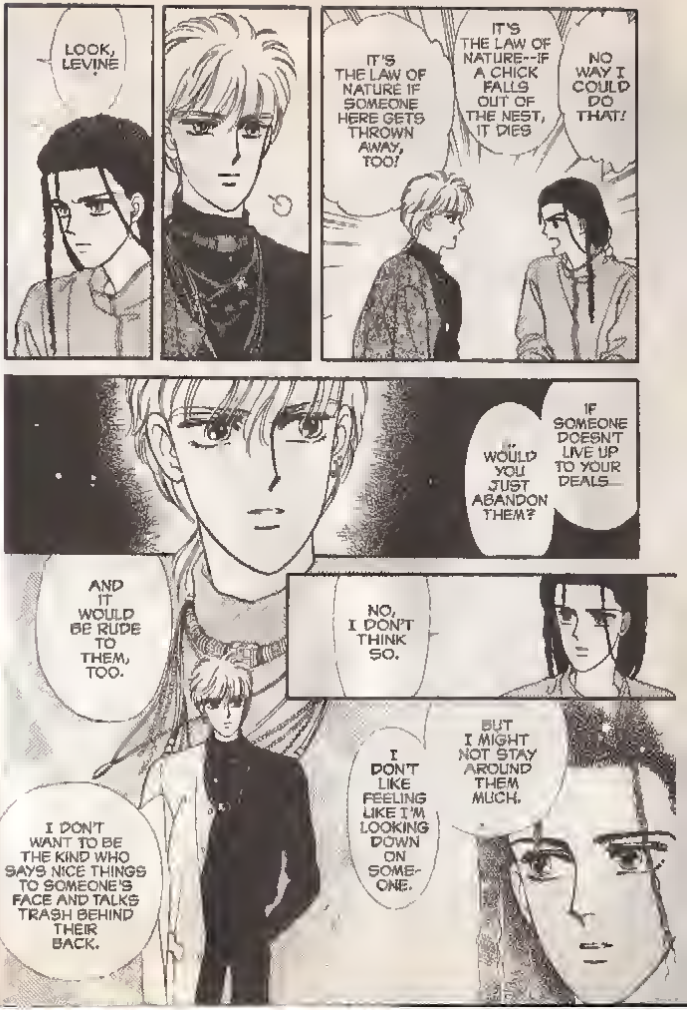
LOOK, LEVINE
IT'S THE LAW OF NATURE IF SOMEONE HERE GETS THROWN AWAY, TOO!
IT'S THE LAW OF NATURE--IF A CHICK FALLS OUT OF THE NEST, IT DIES
NO WAY I COULD DO THAT!
IF SOMEONE DOESN'T LIVE UP TO YOUR DEALS...
...WOULD YOU JUST ABANDON THEM?
NO, I DON'T THINK SO.
AND IT WOULD BE RUDE TO THEM, TOO.
I DON'T WANT TO BE THE KIND WHO SAYS NICE THINGS TO SOMEONE'S FACE AND TALKS TRASH BEHIND THEIR BACK.
I DON'T LIKE FEELING LIKE I'M LOOKING DOWN ON SOME-ONE.
BUT I MIGHT NOT STAY AROUND THEM MUCH.

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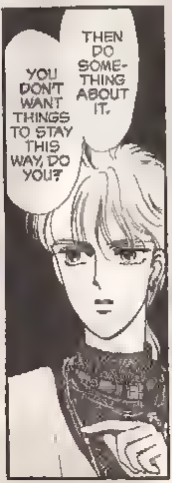

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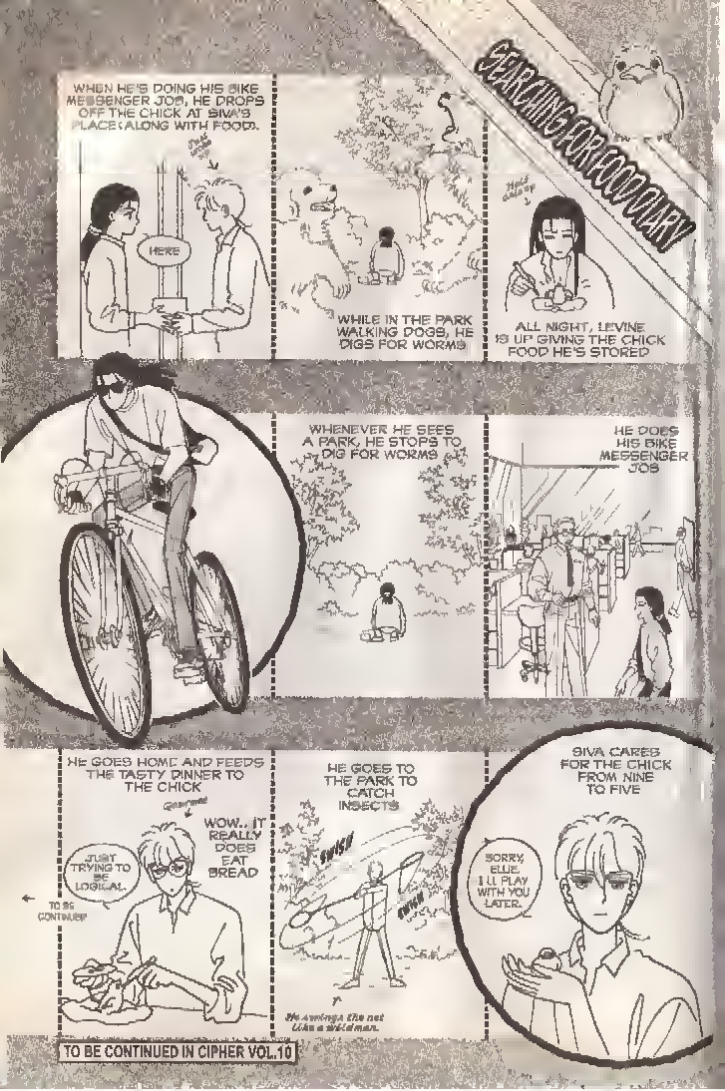
SEARCHING FOR FOOD DIARY


WHEN HE'S DOING HIS BIKE MESSENGER JOB, HE DROPS OFF THE CHICK AT SIVA'S PLACE ALONG WITH FOOD.
HERE
WHILE IN THE PARK WALKING DOGS, HE DIGS FOR WORMS
ALL NIGHT, LEVINE IS UP GIVING THE CHICK FOOD HE'S STORED
WHENEVER HE SEES A PARK, HE STOPS TO DIG FOR WORMS
HE DOES HIS BIKE MESSENGER JOB
HE GOES HOME AND FEEDS THE TASTY DINNER TO THE CHICK
WOW.. IT REALLY DOES EAT BREAD
JUST TRYING TO BE LOGICAL.
TO BE CONTINUED
HE GOES TO THE PARK TO CATCH INSECTS
SWISH
SWISH
He swings the net like a wild man.
SIVA CARES FOR THE CHICK FROM NINE TO FIVE
SORRY, ELLIE. I'LL PLAY WITH YOU LATER.
TO BE CONTINUED IN CIPHER VOL.10

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ANISE SHOCKS SIVA WITH A BOLD REQUEST! FIND OUT WHAT IT IS IN JANUARY!

By Mineko Narita. Siva's memories of Dana's accidental death make him concerned about Alex's job as a bike messenger, hurtling through dangerous city traffic. Then when Siva meets an old enemy from Cipher's drug-using past, Alex begins to suspect the truth about how the twins used to switch identities. Later, Anise has a really big favor to ask of Siva. When he won't agree to her request, she decides that it's time to fly to L.A. and bring back Cipher!

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